LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE INSTITUTION OF AN EQUIPPING MINISTRY

UTILIZING SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO OVERCOME THE PASTOR/LAITY DICHOTOMY

REFERENCE

DO NOT CIRCULATE

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ABSTRACT

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Mark A. Harris

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Mentor: Dr. Frank Schmitt

The purpose of this project is to research and develop an equipping ministry based on the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer emphasizing spiritual gifts. A 27-item Lay Ministry Survey was completed by 99 men and women at four North Carolina churches. Findings indicate that 43 percent of the respondents believe ministry should be performed by professional pastors. Research reveals that the professional pastor and laity have received a call to serve God by spiritual gifts. The church's responsibility is to affirm the call of believers to serve God through their spiritual gifts.

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A review of current literature demonstrates that the development of equipping ministry programs does not begin with the priesthood of the believer. The purpose of this project is to research and develop an equipping ministry based on the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer with an emphasis on the utilization of spiritual gifts. The determination of the believer's spiritual gift can enable him to minister in the area that the Lord has called him.

A 27-item Lay Ministry Survey was completed by 99 men and women at four North Carolina churches. Findings indicate that 43 percent of the respondents believe that ministry is performed only by paid professional pastors.

Research reveals that the professional pastor and laity dichotomy should come to an end before the Church enters the next millennium. All believers have received a call to serve God as evidenced by spiritual gifts. Therefore, it is the church's responsibility to affirm the call of believers to serve God through their spiritual gifts.

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CHAPTER 1
THE NEED FOR EQUIPPING MINISTRY

The Background and Rational for the Project

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry project will be to research and develop an equipping ministry for the New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church congregation. The equipping ministry will be based on the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer with an emphasis on the utilization of spiritual gifts.

It was noted that an equipping ministry was needed for New Lebanon Church due to a lack of interest and commitment on the part of the congregation. The people were not involved in ministry, nor did they utilize their individual spiritual gifts. Also, an equipping ministry program was totally lacking in the church. There was a Sunday School program in place; however, it was inadequate in equipping the members to exercise their particular spiritual gifts for ministry.

A thorough examination of the two major church boards, the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees, demonstrated the need for an equipping ministry at New Lebanon Church. The investigation of the Board of Deacons revealed that the board often expected the pastor to conduct all aspects of visitation and to be responsible for providing all aspects of pastoral care. The pastor’s performance would be formally evaluated on a yearly basis in order to determine if he had met his goals. This move was contradictory to New Lebanon’s Constitution
and Bylaws, which state that Deacons shall provide spiritual care for the sick, shut-ins, and the needy. The Constitution further states that Deacons should enlist new members into the church by witnessing and exemplifying the Christian life. The Deacons are to establish and serve on a Visitation Committee in cooperation with the minister. The problem for New Lebanon Church can then be noted in the fact that the Deacons expect the professional pastor to perform all spiritual aspects of ministry. There was a definite need for the Deacons to be able to provide spiritual care for the congregation.

It was also observed that the Board of Trustees had failed to meet for the past two-year period (April 23, 1992, to January 23, 1994). The Constitution and Bylaws state that the Board of Trustees should meet on a quarterly basis and report to the church on a quarterly basis and at other times as needed such as church business meetings. Therefore, the second problem for New Lebanon can be seen in the Trustees' lack of leadership that is necessary to direct the activities of this vital church board. Thus, one can see the need for ministry to equip these individuals in the area of leadership.

The given equipping ministry was to be based on the priesthood of the believer, one of the main doctrines to be revived during the Protestant Reformation. The main thrust of this doctrine was that all believers have direct access to God through Jesus Christ. This doctrine released believers from the need to go through a human mediator, or a priest, to plead their case before God. All believers were seen as priests because their High Priest Jesus Christ opened access to God by presenting Himself as the sacrifice for their sins. He sits at the
right hand of God, making intercession on behalf of the believers. Therefore, a special class of priests was no longer needed because believers could represent themselves before God through their High Priest Jesus Christ.¹

The second aspect of the priesthood of the believer is that if believers are priests, then they are priests before each other both in the church and out in the world. Believers have the responsibility to minister to one another in order to fulfill their priestly function before God. Thus, the lay ministry should be founded upon Ephesians 4:11-12, "He Himself [Christ] gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" [NKJV]. Therefore, the second foundation of lay ministry should be based upon the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. In other words, ministry begins and resides with the people of God, the "laity."

From the preceding study it was apparent that New Lebanon Church needed to develop an equipping ministry in order to increase the participation of those who were not involved in ministry. This project would not entail creating ministry positions for the mere purpose of increasing the number of officers in the church. However, it would mean identifying those individuals and placing them in ministry positions for the purpose of bringing glory to the Lord Jesus Christ and serving the members of New Lebanon Church.

Though New Lebanon Church is an independent Congregational

¹Greg Ogden. The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 11.
Christian Church, founded in 1897 in the New Bethel Township of rural western Rockingham County of North Carolina, its problem with lay ministry is not unique. Rather, it was noted that the lack of lay leadership is a problem among other churches. New Lebanon Church pastor Mark A. Harris, who has ministerial standing with the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (C.C.C.C.) and is the author of this Doctor of Ministry Project, found the lack of lay leadership to be a problem among other ministries in the C.C.C.C. In a letter dated June 11, 1993, Richard McCulley, Chairman of the Lay Ministry Committee, states that "[the] lack of lay ministry lies with the professional ministers, not the lay ministers. Some laity are content to let the professional do the job for them, . . . [and] pastors are content to do all the work themselves." Also, Larry Stroble, pastor of the Mt. Zion Church in Dayton, Ohio, wrote in a letter dated May 27, 1993, "The growth potential of your church is directly related to your ability to turn ministry over [to] the lay people and their willingness to be equipped and trained. The truth is when lay people get involved in hands-on ministry and see God actually using them, they get invested in ministry and excited."

Findley B. Edge further suggests that the problem of lack of laity involvement lies in the fact that the laity have not adequately understood that God's call to become a part of His people also contains a call to ministry. The laity also lacks sufficient motivation because they fail to understand the call of the salvation relationship. Therefore, the problem is not a lack of ministers: but rather there just are not enough member-ministers who are motivated to answer the call to
ministry.\textsuperscript{2} Edge further suggests that an inactive laity in today's churches is a result of the ministers' training.\textsuperscript{3} In other words, the lack of lay involvement in ministry may very well lie at the door of the professional clergy.

Charles Colson, President of Prison Fellowship, suggests that the church needs to equip and prepare her people for ministry in eight areas. First, the church must equip its members to know and defend their faith and to apply it in the world. Secondly, the church should equip its members to lead exemplary lives in the marketplace. The church should equip its members to build strong marriages and families, to "train up their children in the way they should go." The church should equip its members to fulfill her vocations, to be good stewards of financial resources, and to be effective bearers of the Good News. Lastly, the church must equip its people with specialized training that enables them to reach out to those in particular types of physical and spiritual needs.\textsuperscript{4}

In order to address this problem in New Lebanon Church, the author has attempted to develop a foundation for an equipping ministry for the church's laity by utilizing their spiritual gifts. It is desired that the given program will address three goals: the need for the laity of New Lebanon Church to reach out to its community; the priority of this program to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, not to the leaders of


\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., 38.

the church; and the hope that other churches can either use this program in its totality or at least find ideas which will help them to develop their own unique ministry for the laity.

The Statement of the Problem

As a result of the needs assessment, it was noted that the problem lies in the fact that the active members of New Lebanon Church are not adequately fulfilling the work of ministry, as commanded by Ephesians 4:11-12 and as contained in the Protestant Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. However, it should also be emphasized that this problem is not unique to New Lebanon Church. This fact will be substantiated through an examination of other churches located within the same geographical area.

The Statement of Limitations

This Doctor of Ministry project will be limited in nature due to the following reasons. First, the development of an equipping ministry utilizing spiritual gifts will be limited to New Lebanon Church; however, similar ministries could be developed by using this equipping program as a model. It should be noted that what works in one church will not necessarily work in the same manner in another church since no two churches are alike. Churches may be similar in faith and practice but different in types and philosophies of ministry. Each church should address those ministry needs that pertain to that particular church. Second, a limited survey was conducted among other Congregational Christian churches. The sample will not be a convenience sample of churches that are located in close proximity to the given church; but
the survey will be limited to the areas of Rockingham County and Alamance County in North Carolina, and Danville, Virginia. This Doctor of Ministry project will evaluate only some of the currently developed equipping ministries, specifically those programs which are based on spiritual gifts. Lastly, the sample is limited to a convenient sample of churches known to the author and lacks random selection. Therefore, the study is limited to a specific location, and without randomization the author cannot make any generalizations concerning the population.

The Review of the Literature

In order to review current literature concerning the development of an equipping ministry the author utilized several avenues. A computer search was conducted using Dissertation Abstracts. The phrases "priesthood and believer," "equipping and ministry," "lay and ministry" were designated for the search. Further search descriptors included assimilation, spiritual gifts, and clergy/laity. The computer search revealed that a number of Doctor of Ministry projects covering the subject matter were completed at Drew University. The review of the literature revealed the following information.

Steven Alan Rumley's Doctor of Ministry field project examines the body of believers at the First Baptist Church of Matthews, North Carolina, and concludes that the work of ministry is primarily performed by the clergy. However, he suggests that the lack of ministry is not entirely the fault of the congregation. Rather, he sees that the problem lies in the fact that the deacons have never been challenged or trained to work in different areas of ministry. Furthermore, he identified six areas of ministry that the deacons should be involved in
including leadership, visitation, staff support, salvation, crisis situations, and discipleship.⁵

Peter D. Nordstrom's Doctor of Ministry field project takes the position that scripture teaches that all of God's people are called to ministry. He suggests that pastoral care and visitation ministry be based on spiritual gifts. He envisions that the pastor's responsibility is to equip the membership to use their own spiritual gifts for ministry. Nordstrom contends that as the laity reaches out to those in need, caring for them in a Christ-like way, the incarnation ["God with us"] will become a living reality in their lives.⁶

Richard Duane Hogan's Doctor of Ministry field project focuses upon "The Equipping Ministry," in which the professional minister equipped Christian laymen (laos) for their own particular ministry. The blueprint for the study was based on Ephesians 4:11-12, with its scriptural examples of Jesus and the Apostle Paul equipping their own disciples. The specific ministry of the laos was personal evangelism carried out through a pilot project. This project consisted of four motifs including enlistment, impression, expression and evaluation. Preparation for the congregation's involvement in the project was based on preaching and teaching.

Ten laos were chosen to be equipped as participants in Hogan's ministry of evangelism. Hogan conceptualized three witnessing

⁵Steven Allen Rumley, "Developing a Shared Ministry with the Deacon Fellowship at the First Baptist Church of Matthews, Matthews, North Carolina" (D.Min. field project report, Drew University, 1991).

⁶Peter D. Nordstrom, "Incarnational Lay Pastoral Care Visitation Training" (D.Min. field project report, Drew University, 1986).
possibilities in the community of his church. The first witnessing possibility was "Jerusalem," which involved the laos in a limited religious census in the neighborhood of the church. The second witnessing possibility was "Judea," in which the laos witnessed to prospective members who had demonstrated interest in the church. The third witnessing possibility was "Samaria," an effort on the part of the laos to reclaim membership dropouts.

According to Hogan, the pilot project demonstrated the possibility of a workable lay evangelism outreach for any interested congregation. He further states that this project contributed to his ministry by giving him a deep sense of personal satisfaction in a successful new venture. Also, the project resulted in a church that promises to be a more caring, growing church through personal visitation and witnessing.7

Aubrey Daniel Hay's Doctor of Ministry field project addressed the need for lay involvement in a traditional Southern Baptist Church. The author's view of the problem was how to encourage and involve lay people in a caring ministry that is dominated by the professional clergy. The author points to biblical and early church references, particularly the teachings in Ephesians 4:11-12, as the historical and traditional support for lay involvement. The author further contends that lay people not only can do pastoral ministry but are mandated to perform such tasks. Also, the author covers areas of resistance, the most prominent being the prevailing denominational pattern of assigning pastoral care to clergy. The author calls into question models of

leadership that emphasize clergy-dominated leadership. Furthermore, he points to lay apathy as a contributing factor in resistance to lay involvement.  

C. Gene Selander's Doctor of Ministry field project addresses the issue of how a church faces critical times when lay volunteers do not support the program ministries of the church. He states that it is necessary for the laity to demonstrate ownership of the ministry through the practical outworking of each believer's gospel tasks. In order to create ministry ownership, churches and their leaders must gain a sound perspective. Ministry objectives often fail when the commitment of the laity is short lived. Therefore, Selander's project further provides churches with an overview of elements which create lay ownership of ministry. This Doctor of Ministry project describes a foundation model for creating and sustaining lay ownership of ministry by utilizing equipping ministries. He identified the equipping ministries as evangelism, discipleship, prayer, and small groups. However, the selection of gospel tasks was done through a participatory decision-making matrix.  

The Definition of Terms

In order to emphasize the idea that the people of God should be involved in ministry, the author examined five terms commonly used by

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8Aubrey Daniel Hay, "Developing a Lay Ministry of Pastoral Care in the First Baptist Church, Erwin, Tennessee (Southern Baptist)" (D.Min. field project report, Drew University, 1990).

both laity and clergy. The purpose of the word study was to show that biblical terms which should apply to the whole body of believers have often been restricted to the ordained clergy. However, it was noted that in their original biblical usage, they apply to the whole body of believers.

**Saints**

The term "saints" comes from the Greek word *hagios* which fundamentally signifies "to be separated." The biblical usage of the term means to be separated from sin and, therefore, to be consecrated to God. Saints are those who are called, who have love for one another (Ephesians 1:15), who stand by people in need (Romans 12:13), who do not profane the sacred by bringing disputes with fellow believers before secular authorities, but allow the saints to judge them (1 Corinthians 6:1). In the Pauline epistles those who named Jesus as their Lord were called the saints. Therefore, the biblical usage of the word saint identified those who knew Jesus Christ as their Lord, and not one particular group in the body of Christ.

However, today the term "saint" has come to mean one who is part of the spiritual elite. The term is also used as a title, particularly in both the Protestant and Catholic traditions. Protestants label saints as those who are apostles (St. Paul) or authors of Scripture (St. Mark). On the other hand, Catholics have canonized certain individuals who meet certain criteria such as performing verifiable miracles. Also, those who have given their lives to God in a religious order or are
Minister

The term "minister" comes from the Greek term *diakonos*, which primarily denotes a "servant," whether doing servile work or rendering free service. The primary meaning of the term in secular Greek was a waiter at a table. The term occurs frequently in the New Testament and is used to describe the following people: domestic servants (John 2:5-9); the civil ruler (Romans 13:4); Christ (Romans 15:8; Galatians 2:17); the followers of Christ in relation to their Lord (John 12:26; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 4:7); the followers of Christ in the work of preaching and teaching (1 Corinthians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 6:4; 11:23; Ephesians 3:7; Colossians 1:23, 25; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 1 Timothy 4:6); those who serve in the churches (Romans 16:1; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8, 12); and a woman (Romans 16:1).

Another term associated with minister is the term "ministry," which comes from the Greek word *diakonia* meaning "service, ministry." This term denotes the office and work of a *diakonos* (servant). The idea conveyed by the term *diakonia* involved serving the table (Acts 6:1). *Diakonia* is associated with the breaking of bread in private homes as well as with the agapes, where the rich also cared for the poor (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). The house church mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:15 devoted itself to *diakonia*. This service or ministry, in which strength and possessions were used for others, can be seen as the continuous element of fellowship (2 Corinthians 9:13; Acts 5:4; 2

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Corinthians 9:7). The service or ministry was extended from the local church to churches in need of help throughout the world (Acts 11:29; 12:25; 2 Corinthians 8:3; 9:12-15). The spiritual and physical diakonia of giving and receiving takes place in the acknowledgment of the sacrifice of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:12-15). Paul used diakonia for each particular spiritual gift. The term diakonia can also be used as a technical term for the work of proclaiming the gospel (Romans 11:13; 2 Corinthians 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:5). Thus, the whole church becomes a body of service to the world (Ephesians 4:1-16). The body of the church is composed of members, or "servants," and functions in preparation for the return of Jesus Christ.

The biblical usage of "minister" or "ministry" does not refer to any particular class of people who were set apart from the rest of the body of the church. However, according to modern usage, the ministry has been reserved for those individuals who have received a call from God to enter the ranks of the ordained. To be ordained means to enter an ecclesiastical hierarchial class separated from those who have not attained the privilege of entering this class because they have chosen a "secular" way of life. The fact that those who have entered the ministry are given titles such as "reverend" further sets them apart.  

Priest

The biblical usage of "priest" can be traced back to the Old Testament and the priesthood in Israel. The task of the priest in Israel was originally not sacrificial service but oracular divination.

11Greg Ogden, The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God, 60.
( Judges 17:5; 18:5; 1 Samuel 14:36-42 ) and instruction in the Torah ( Deuteronomy 27:9; 31:4 ). In the New Testament, "priests" referred mainly to the Levitical priests. However, in the book of Hebrews, the term is used when speaking of Christ; and in the book of Revelation, it refers to Christians.

In Revelation 1:6 and 5:10, Christians are called "kings and priests" and are thus designated for service to God. In addition, Peter uses the concept of the priesthood to embrace the idea of access to God through intimate knowledge and through the prophetic role of the priesthood in order to proclaim the knowledge of God ( 1 Peter 2:9 ). Therefore, this concept of "priest" complements the idea of offering spiritual sacrifices ( 1 Peter 2:15 ). Thus, the priesthood of all believers is seen as superseding the Jewish priesthood. In Romans 15:16, Paul describes his gracious calling. He was called to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God.

Today in the Catholic tradition, the term "priest" is associated with those who are connected to the Roman Catholic clergy. These priests represent the people before God. Priests have entered a holy order and are set apart through the taking of vows. Those who are priests are addressed by the title "Father," which stands for one who is able to hear confession and grant absolution.

In the Protestant tradition, the minister, has a certain priestly quality, but he is not addressed as "Father." A minister is seen as carrying the sacramental presence of Christ probably because of his/her ministerial office or ordination. Too often the minister is seen as one
who is closer or more available to Christ than an ordinary Christian.\textsuperscript{12}

Clergy

The term "clergy" is derived from the Greek word \textit{kleros}, which is usually translated to mean "lot" or "inheritance." The word is used in the New Testament, appearing in Acts 1:17, 25 and 1 Peter 5:3. Some ancient writers such as Augustine maintain that the term indicates that the lot by which Matthias was chosen as an apostle gave the first general name for the chiefs of the church as a class. Jerome says they were called clergy either because they were chosen by lot to be the Lord's or because the Lord was their lot or heritage.

However, the New Testament makes it clear that men were appointed to the work of Christian ministry. Apostles had been selected by Christ Himself without any intermediate authority. Timothy and Titus were set apart as evangelists. During the lifetime of the apostles, prophets were those who laid hands on others (1 Corinthians 14:3, 22-24). Also, the New Testament considers ordinary ministers as individuals who were set apart as elders, presbyters, pastors, bishops and teachers (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 14:23; 15:6; Titus 1:5). Divinely called and appointed to their work (Acts 20:28), they were entitled to be supported by the churches to whom they ministered. Their duties included feeding the flock, caring for the church, governing the church of God, and watching out for souls (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17). Yet it is obvious that when one considers the biblical usage of the word "clergy," it was never intended to create a separate class of Christians.

\textsuperscript{12}Greg Ogden, \textit{The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God}, 62-63.
In modern usage the term "clergy" is the general name given to those who are set apart by ordination. Such individuals are given the duty of performing Christian worship and teaching and are, therefore, said to be in orders. In the Apostolic church there was no distinction between clergy and laity with regard to privilege or sanctity. All believers were called to the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices for Christ (1 Peter 5:3). The distinction between clergy and laity became prominent and universally recognized at the time of Cyprian (258 AD). Cyprian is considered the father of the hierarchical system. Since the third century, the term clerus has been applied to the ministry in order to distinguish the ministers from the laity. The development of the Roman hierarchy established clergy as a distinct order and recognized clergymen as the only priesthood and essential means of communication between man and God.13

Laity

The term "laity" comes from the Greek word laos, which means "the people at large," especially the people assembled together (Matthew 27:15; Luke 1:21; 3:15; Acts 4:27). It can also mean "crowd" or "the common people." Laos is a people of the same race and language (Revelation 5:9), specifically those from Israel (Matthew 2:6; 4:23; John 11:50; Acts 4:8; Hebrews 2:17). The term laos set the common Israelites apart from their rulers and priests (Matthew 26:5; Luke 20:19; Hebrews 5:3) and separated them from the Gentiles (Acts 26:17).

The usage of laos was transferred to the Christian church. God has taken from the nations a people for His name (Acts 15:14). God has called a church from the Jews and the Gentiles (Romans 9:24). Even the local church (Acts 18:10) is the temple and laos of God (2 Corinthians 6:14ff). Therefore, it is apparent from the biblical usage that laos refers to the "people of God."

In modern usage the term "laity" is used to refer to those individuals who form the vast majority of the church as opposed to those who have been ordained. In fact, when the two groups are considered, the clergy and the laity are often viewed as opposites in both office and function. Ordained clergy are considered to be "professional," "qualified," and "trained;" whereas the laity are considered to be "unprofessional," "unqualified," and "untrained."

The Reasons for the Problem

It is apparent that the body of Christ has been divided into two groups or two classes of Christians. These two classes are identified in many different ways. The first-class Christians today are known as the clergy, the pastor, the ordained, the called, and the sacred. The second-class Christians are known as the laity, the laypeople, the unordained, the ignored, and the secular.14 The second-class group has been relegated to a position of inferiority perhaps because the laity are viewed as the individuals who are without a calling, without a

ministry, and who are often seen as exempt from the Great Commission.\textsuperscript{15}

There are several reasons for this vast dichotomy. Both the clergy and the laity have strong views and reasons for the separation of these two classes of Christians. Each class holds expectations not only for its own class but also for the other class. However, it should be noted that not all clergy and laity hold to all of the given expectations. These expectations reflect the general views of both the modern clergy and modern laity.

Expectations of the Clergy

Today's clergy generally has very low expectations of the laity. This fact may be attributed to the following reasons. First, those Christians who are not members of the clergy are classified as laymen. Secondly, the very name "laymen" reminds the church members that they are not ministers because they have not received ordination or have not been called to the ministry. Thirdly, the idea of developing a strong group of unordained ministers is often seen as a threat to the ministry of the professional clergy, the church, or even possibly to the denomination.\textsuperscript{16} Fourthly, the clergy today is suspicious of and some are even hostile to some of the popular expressions of the laity regarding the Christian faith. Lastly, today's clergy is concerned with the low standard of beliefs and practices of the laity.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.


Expectations of the Laity

The modern laity generally has high expectations of the clergy as reflected in the following views. First, the trained professional is seen as one who has received a personal call from God for the work of ministry. Secondly, the trained professional receives renumeration for the ministries which he provides; therefore, his ministry is seen as his job, and he does not need untrained laymen to assist him in his ministry. Thirdly, church members expect the pastor to perform such numerous tasks as those of an administrator, an evangelist, a preacher, a pastor, a teacher, a counselor, an organizer, a promoter, a scholar, and others. Fourthly, the professional clergy possesses a monopoly over the work in which they have specialized; consequently, the laity are often hesitant to trespass on the turf of the professional clergy.

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18Edge, The Doctrine of the Laity, 77.

CHAPTER 2
THE THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH

It is apparent that the church has been divided into two groups or two classes of Christians. In this chapter the theological and sociological aspects of the church will be examined. This subject is too broad to be fully explicated in this chapter. Therefore, a survey will be presented that will explain the different concepts and biblical metaphors of the church.

The Nature of the Church

In order to describe the nature of the church, one must consider both its origin and composition. First of all, the Holy Spirit is the part of the Godhead who establishes the church. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Secondly, it should be noted that the church is one body. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:12 speaks of only "one body." and he states in Ephesians 2:16. "...that He [Christ] might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross..." Therefore, no particular denomination, sect, or any other religious body has the right to claim that it is exclusively the church. This one church is made up of all true Christians of this present age (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The nature of the church can also be described through the imagery
used by the writers of the New Testament. For example the church is often referred to as "the People of God," "the Body of Christ," "the Bride of Christ," "the Temple of God," and "the Priesthood." Other images used by the New Testament writers in describing the nature of the church include "the Flock" and "the Vine and the Branches."

The image of "the People of God" involves several ideas. First, the members of the church are "God's elect" (Romans 8:33; Colossians 3:12), "the elect" (1 Peter 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:10), or "an elect race" (1 Peter 2:9). The church is founded upon the "counsel" and "good pleasure of His [God's] will" (Ephesians 1:5, 11) and the "chosen [elected] in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). Accordingly, the church membership consists of those whom God predestined in sovereign love and called throughout history into fellowship with Him and membership in the assembly. Secondly, the image implies ownership or possession since the members are chosen and elected by God; therefore, the church belongs to God. This idea is exemplified in such phrases as "the People of God" (1 Peter 2:10), "a people for God's own possession" (1 Peter 2:9 [New American Standard Bible]), and "My people" (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). The fact that these members are set apart is denoted by the terms "saint" and "sanctified" (1 Corinthians 1:2), and they are joined with Christ or called into fellowship with Christ (Romans 5:14; 6:5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Galatians 2:19; Colossians 2:12). Lastly, the members of the church are people of faith because they have responded to the call and invitation of God. These members are considered brethren and are commanded to love one another (1 Timothy 6:2; 1 John 3:14).
Several ideas are implied by "the Body of Christ," an image found in the following passages of Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Colossians 1:18; 2:19; Ephesians 1:22-23. For example, the church has no existence or life apart from Christ; therefore, its whole existence is dependent upon Him. The members share a common salvation and a common spiritual life. Also, the church is a living, moving, and growing organism much like a human being. Furthermore, the church is one body: and its members are mutually interdependent upon one another as evidenced by unity in diversity, the gifts of the Holy Spirit complementing one another, and the idea of different functions and offices working together as do the parts of a human body. Since the church is the body of Christ, it is God's will that the parts work together instead of creating divisions within the body (John 17:11; 1 Corinthians 12:25).

The image of "the Bride of Christ" can be found in many passages of Scripture including 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:22-23, and Revelation 19:7-9. Several ideas are conveyed through the use of this image. The love of Christ for His Bride [the church] should be first and foremost. This love is to be reciprocated by the Bride [church] the object of His affection. Just as a husband provides for the needs of his wife, so does Christ provide for the needs of His Bride [the church]. As a bride is commanded to be submissive to her groom, so also the church is to be submissive to her Groom [Christ] by submitting to the Lordship of Christ. Furthermore, as in a marriage this relationship is characterized as being permanent in nature.

The image of the church as "the temple of God" conveys several
principles. The church is founded upon the historical person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10-11). Just as a building has a cornerstone in its foundation, likewise the church's cornerstone is Christ (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6). Furthermore, the stones of the building as described by the Apostle Peter are considered to be "living stones" (1 Peter 2:5). These stones [believers] are individuals who have received life from and have an ongoing relationship with the "living stone" Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:20-22). Each stone built upon the foundation [Jesus Christ] is continually being added to and fitted together in order to extend the building [church].

The image of "the priesthood" is based upon 1 Peter 2:5, 2:9-10. Revelation 1:6, and 5:10. The main idea of this image is that the church is a priestly people. The image of "the priesthood" also communicates the following concepts: the church is chosen by God; the church is sanctified (1 Peter 2:5) and set apart (Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:22); the church offers sacrifices to God in that the believers give of themselves (Romans 12:1); the church is to be a witness (1 Peter 2:9); and the church has a ministry of intercession (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

The image of the "shepherd and His flock" occurs frequently in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament the picture is one of a shepherd [God] who loves and tenderly cares for his sheep [Israel]; while in the New Testament the flock or sheep [composed of both Jews and Gentiles] is the church, and the shepherd represents Jesus Christ. The primary concept revealed in this image is that the ownership and care of the sheep [the church] is by the shepherd [Jesus Christ], and that the sheep [the church] are subject to the rule of the
shepherd [Jesus Christ].

Yet another image found in the Old Testament, that of the vine and the branches, is the nation of Israel symbolized by a vine which though planted by God failed to bear the desired fruit (Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezekiel 15:1-5; 19:10-14). This image is also used in John 15, where Jesus states that He is the "true vine" who brings forth fruit from its branches. These branches represent His disciples who abide in Him.

The Purpose of the Church

According to the Word of God, the church has many different functions. These functions are also known as purposes, and henceforth the functions of the church will be referred to as the purposes of the church. The ultimate purpose of the church is to bring honor and glory to its head Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:14-22; 3:21). If the church is to glorify God, then the church is to show forth His glory to the world (1 Peter 2:10, 12). The calling of the church is to reveal to the world the glory of God's character, which is found in His son the Lord Jesus Christ.

Closely related to this purpose of showing forth God's glory to the world would be the purpose of evangelization. Just before His ascension, Christ commanded the church to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). According to the other commands found in the Word of God, the evangelization of the church is
accomplished through its members by word and act. This purpose is manifested by the spoken proclamation of the Word and is borne by those who submit to the Word.

The church demonstrates evidence of evangelism when it witnesses to the world through corporate worship. According to John 4:23-24, God is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and truth, not those who merely go through a formality and act as if they are worshipping God. Worship is at the heart of the church's purpose. The church is to adore and offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving together as the people of God.

Another purpose of the church is that of fellowship, which is accomplished in the life of the believers through their fellowship with God. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ shows that He longs to have fellowship with His disciples (Matthew 26:36-40). Moreover, 1 John 1:3 states, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Fellowship among the believers is manifested by the sharing of goods with those both within and outside the church (Acts 4:32). Fellowship is the key to unity within the church. The key to fellowship is love and the key to love is humility.

Still another purpose of the church is the edification of the believers. The work of edification is accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit through the ministries of the leaders (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:3) and eventually through every believer in the body (Ephesians 4:12, 16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11). The church works, therefore, as a means of grace with every believer under the instruction, discipline, and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.
There are three primary goals of edification. First, edification helps the believer to grow toward spiritual maturity. Secondly, edification equips the believer to perform that work in the Body of Christ that God wants him/her to perform. In the real sense, each church member is to be a minister so that the work that God wants to perform through the local church can be accomplished. Thirdly, edification provides instruction, which gives substance to the believer’s faith, stability in times of teaching, ability to handle the Word of God correctly, ability to detect and confront error in false teaching, confidence to reach Christian spiritual maturity, and security to calm fears and cancel superstitions.

Along with edification, there is purification, which is likewise the work of Christ. "[Who] gave Himself for it [the church], that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27). The church should allow purification to work within its midst. a process which demands submission to the discipline of God the Father (Hebrews 12:5-7).

Finally, the church is to maintain, preserve, and protect the truth of God. 1 Timothy 3:15 states, "But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."1

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The Church as an Organism

As presented above, the New Testament presents many different images of the church such as the household of God, the people of God, the bride of Christ, and a fellowship of the Holy Spirit. However, the image that dominates the New Testament in its description of the church is the body of Christ. This image points to the fact that the church is also an organism. An organism is any individual animal or plant which has diverse organs and parts which function together as a whole for the purpose of maintaining life and activities. Therefore, "the church in its essence is nothing less than a life-pulsating people who are animated by the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ."² The image of the church as the body of Christ reflects the reality of the church as an organism. This reality is described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:12 where he states, "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ" [NKJV]. This metaphor points to the fact that Jesus dwells among His people, the church, and gives them life.

The church initiated by God is comprised of a living membership made up of believers who confess Christ as Lord. According to Ray Stedman, "The life of Jesus is still being manifest among men, but now no longer through an individual physical body, limited to one place on earth, but through a complex, corporate body called the church."³ Stedman suggests that this manifestation is being accomplished through

the ongoing incarnation. God's program for reaching the world has been through the incarnation, in which He chose to visit this earth to demonstrate to mankind this new life that He was offering. Therefore, God became flesh and dwelt among us. Although Jesus Christ was the incarnation of God, His appearance as man was only the beginning of the process. This incarnation is still taking place through the church. The Book of Acts shows the record of Jesus at work among mankind through His new body, which is the church. Stedman further suggests, "The church, therefore, when it lives in and by the Spirit, is to be nothing more nor less than the extension of the life of Jesus to the whole world in any age."5

According to Greg Ogden, "The church is the aggregate body to whom Jesus has given His life."6 In other words, Jesus dwells within the believers who constitute the membership of the body. Ogden further states, "If you touch Christians, you have touched Christ."7 Ogden explains that Christians are a sacramental people. A sacrament, according to Ogden, is a means of grace, a symbol that mysteriously bears the presence of Christ and through which believers encounter Jesus Christ. Therefore, "the church is a sacramental people who are corporately and individually the conduit of Christ."8

4Stedman, Body Life, 38.
5Ibid., 39.
7Ibid.
8Ibid.
The church then as an organism is totally dependent upon its Head, Jesus Christ. The church's unique relationship with Jesus Christ is explicitly stated in Ephesians 1:22: "He [God] put all things under His [Jesus Christ] feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church" [NKJV]. The understanding of the word "head" in this verse is a reference to Christ, and it has two primary meanings. First, the word "head" means that we are totally reliant upon Jesus as being our life source. According to Ogden, "The church is absolutely dependent on Jesus Christ for its life. It has no life in itself. It is on life support." Ogden further states that the way that the church taps into this life source is through both public and private worship. Second, the word "head" means that the church is under the direct authority of Jesus Christ; that is, Jesus as the Head arranges life in the body the church. Ogden states, "Each member is directly connected to the Head and therefore able to receive signals from the head. Every member as a part of the body finds the role suggested by the spiritual gifts assigned to him or her. The Lord through the immediacy of the Holy Spirit determines each person's function." In order for the church to function as an organism, those who make up the body of Christ must seek to fulfill obediently the role God has assigned to each of them.

If the essence of the church can be categorized as an organism, then the members in the church are to share in divine life. Ogden

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9 Ogden, The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God, 33.

10 Ibid, 34-35.

11 Ibid, 35-36.
states. "Jesus lives in us. We have life only as we remain in Him: our relationship to each other has to do with passing on the life He has placed in us." Ogden suggests that the Apostle Paul depicts this unique relationship in three different ways.

First, each member of the body of Christ belongs to each other. Ogden quotes the Apostle Paul: "For by one Spirit we were baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). According to Ogden, everyone who comes into the church comes by the same means regardless of who they are or what they have done.

Secondly, each member of the body of Christ needs each other. Ogden again quotes the Apostle Paul: "For the body does not consist of one member, but of many" (1 Cor. 12:14). Therefore, Ogden suggests that no one in the body is complete in and of oneself: we are whole only in relationship to other members of the body. In other words, we are created for relationship.

Thirdly, each member of the body of Christ affects the others. According to Ogden, we have been called to leave a holy imprint on each other through two means: in our ministry (1 Corinthians 12:4-8) and in our relationships (1 Corinthians 12:26). Ogden states that "it is through our ministry that we contribute to the good of the whole. Our
ministry is defined by the gifts God has given to us." He further states that "in the body of Christ, what happens to one member affects the whole." For example, if one member suffers, the whole body suffers; and if one member rejoices, the whole body rejoices.

To say that the church is an organism means that the church is a people in whom Jesus invests His life. The members then constitute the body of Christ, a people who are connected and receive signals from its Head Jesus Christ. Also, the members of the body of Christ are a people through whom divine life is transmitted to one another.

The Church as a Priesthood

The church as a priesthood is limited to 1 Peter 2:5 and 9, where the Apostle Peter states, "You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5 NKJV). The Apostle Peter states further in 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (NKJV). Though the concept of the church as a priesthood is stated in these two verses, the truth is elaborated in other books of the Bible especially in the epistle to the Hebrews.

Peter writes of a "holy priesthood" in 1 Peter 2:5, and he refers to a "royal priesthood" in verse 2:9. What did Peter mean when he used

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15 Ogden. The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God. 41.

16 Ibid. 42.

17 Ibid. 43.
the term "priesthood?" Was he referring to professional clergy? Peter states in 1 Peter 1:1 that he is writing "to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" [NKJV]. It should be noted that Peter is not writing to the elders and bishops but to those who had been scattered due to severe persecution. Therefore, the "you" found in chapter 2. verses 5 and 9 is plural, supporting the idea that God's people are called into the priesthood. Also, when the "living stones" of verse 5, are built into the house [the church], they become the body of priests who minister in the house [the church].

According to Earl D. Radmacher in his book, What the Church Is All About, every believer in this present dispensation is considered a priest unto God. This priesthood would include the professional clergy as well as the laity. Radmacher further says, "This entire complex of believer-priests constitutes a holy and royal priesthood under the authority of Christ, who is the true High Priest, of whom all other high priests were but types." Furthermore, Edward Gordon Selwyn in his commentary, The First Epistle of St. Peter explains, "The Christian Church is a priesthood, because it bears the same relation to mankind as a whole as the Jewish priesthood bore to the whole people of Israel."

If the church is considered a priesthood, then the church must have a relationship with Israel. Lewis Sperry Chafer points out these similarities between Israel and the church:

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Each, in turn, has its own peculiar relation to God, to righteousness, to sin, to redemption, to salvation, to human responsibility, and to destiny. They are each witnesses to the Word of God: each may claim the same Shepherd: they have doctrines in common: the death of Christ avails in its own way for each: they are alike loved with an everlasting love: and each, as determined by God, will be glorified.²⁰

Thus, there are similarities between Israel and the church; yet there are distinctions between the two that cannot be equated. Radmacher uses the following analogy comparing Israel and the church: "A table and chair may be similar in that they have common characteristics, such as being products made of wood and having four legs. Yet, one would hardly attempt to say that they are the same."²¹

One obvious similarity between Israel and the church is in respect to the "kingdom of priests" and the word "kingdom" found in Exodus 19:5-6. According to Radmacher, this is the first instance in the Bible where the word "kingdom" is in direct association with God's rule upon the earth. Radmacher states:

This kingdom was to be given to one nation, "the children of Israel" (v. 6). Although Israel was to be specially related to God as His "peculiar treasure" (v. 5), yet it was to have a ministry to all the nations, for the Lord declares: "all the earth is mine" (v. 6). In the light of this universal relationship the nation Israel was to be constituted a "kingdom of priests" in order that it might be the mediatorial agency in religious matters between the true God and the nations of the earth.²²

Therefore, the nation of Israel as a mediatorial agency would function as God's "kingdom of priests" among the nations of the world. This function would continue as long as Israel obeyed the voice of God as


²¹Radmacher, What the Church Is All About, 282-283.

²²Ibid., 283.
expressed in the Law of Moses (Exodus 19:5-6ff). However, "a kingdom of priests" as a mediatorial agency would be cut off by God if Israel became disobedient and unworthy.23

Radmacher points to the figure of the olive tree in Romans 11 as he explains.

Scriptural revelation describes both Israel and the church as earthly mediatorial agencies through which God has worked and is working among the nations of the world. Although each is a distinct entity and is not included in the other, both hold a similar function; that is, both are agencies through which God mediates His blessing to mankind. Israel is not the olive tree but is in the olive tree; the church is not the olive tree but is in the olive tree; and each finds its place in the olive tree in this order: first Israel, then the church, then Israel.24

In other words, Israel can be referred to as a "kingdom of priests" and the church as a "royal priesthood." Since God has rejected Israel as the mediatorial agency "kingdom of priests," the church now constitutes the new mediatorial agency in this dispensation, the "royal priesthood." Radmacher concludes, "This by no means implies that the church is Israel or Israel is the church. The promises of Israel do not transfer to the church, which has specific blessings and privileges of its own."25 However, it should be noted that the Apostle Paul asserts in Romans 11:26-27 that Israel is to be restored in the future as a mediatorial agency. This restoration is possible due to the unconditional covenant promises made to Israel as a nation.26

The fact that there was no priesthood in the first century

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23Radmacher. What the church Is All About. 284.
24Ibid. 284-285.
25Ibid. 285.
26Ibid. 287.
Christian church was a strange phenomenon in comparison with other religions, all of which had priests. Radmacher states, "Priesthood is at the very root of all religion. Every pagan religion, regardless of how corrupt and degenerate it might be, has a priesthood." Although the book of Acts reports that the apostles were given a prominent place in leadership especially as pastors and teachers, the apostles never laid claim to being priests. According to Radmacher,

While the Christians had no priests, the truth is that in the Scriptures every Christian is called a priest. In the former dispensation, Israel had a priesthood, but in the present dispensation the church is a priesthood. Thus, Peter calls the church "an holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5) and "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9). Therefore, an examination should be made into what the function of the Old Testament priest was and how the priesthood metaphor applies to the church.

A priest is "one who is duly authorized to minister in sacred things, particularly to offer sacrifices at the altar, and who acts as mediator between men and God." The office of priest in Israel was one of high rank, particularly the high priest who stood next to the monarch in influence and dignity.

It is also important to determine how the apostle Peter conceived of the idea of priesthood. Peter understood that the priesthood's primary task was that of ministering to the people, that is, serving the

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27Radmacher. What the Church Is All About. 287.

28Ibid., 290.

holy God in worship. The priest was neither elected by the people nor self-appointed but appointed by God; therefore, the priesthood implies a Divine choice (Hebrews 5:1, 4). The institution of the priesthood by God was a gracious provision for a people who had distanced themselves from God yet needed someone to appear in the Divine presence on their behalf (Hebrews 2:17). Thus, the high priest was to act for men in matters pertaining to God. According to Peter, believers were chosen and called by God (1 Pet. i. 1, 15); they had become Christians through baptism (1 Pet. iii. 21, cf. 1. 22, ii. 1), which washed away the stains of sin, and had received the laying-on of hands (Heb. vi. 2); they had an “anointing” (1 Jn. ii. 20, 27); and they were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood (1 Pet. i. 2, 18-21, 1 Jn. i. 7, Heb. x. 22, xii. 24) of the new covenant established by Christ.30

In a similar manner, the Apostle John, on two separate occasions in the book of Revelation, notes that Christians are priests (Revelation 1:6; 5:2). These general statements indicate that all of those who are in Christ are priests before God. In Christ are those who have been redeemed by Christ: and when we find ourselves in Christ, we have been called by God as priests.

Also, the priesthood implies the offering of a sacrifice. It was the chief duty of the high priest to reconcile men to God by making atonement for their sins, which he effected by means of sacrifice. Finally, the priesthood implies intercession, which is grounded in atonement or sacrifice. The sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies served to cover the guilt of the people from the face of God, and at the same time it was an appeal to pardon and forgive

30Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter, 292.
The major principle of the Old Testament priesthood was access to God. In the Old Testament, "The priests served before God in the tabernacle and the Temple; they had the right to enter the holy place; and one of them, the high priest, although only once a year, went into the Holy of Holies." It should be noted that the priest's relationship with God was one which was holy, intimate, and direct when compared to the individual's relationship with God.

The metaphor of this priesthood applied to the church is evident in the fact that each believer has the privilege of appearing directly before God. In other words, each believer has the privilege of access to God. Thus, no priest is required since the Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, has gone before, once and for all, to provide access to God. Christ Himself has offered the sacrifice that has put an end to all sacrifice (Hebrews 9:25-26; 10:11-12).

According to Radmacher, because of this finality of the once-for-all offering of the High Priest and the fact that He has passed through the heavens (Heb. 4:14) to the very throne of God, the writer of Hebrews is able to exhort the members of the priesthood, the church, "to come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb 4:16).

This free access to the throne of grace is not limited to a certain class of believers. The laity as well as the clergy have equal privileges of access to the throne of grace. Edward Selwyn explains, "The Christian Church is a priesthood, because it bears the same

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32Radmacher, What the Church Is All About. 291.
33Ibid.
34Ibid., 292.
relation to mankind as a whole as the Jewish priesthood bore to the whole people of Israel."  

Finally, Radmacher states,

Wherever they are, whoever they may be, however they may rate socially, whatever their denominational connections are, if they are true believers, they belong to this royal priesthood. All together they form a priesthood. The church is not an oligarchy in which a few have authority to dictate to the many, nor is it a sacerdotal religion in which there is a class of priests with special privileges.

Therefore, every believer is a priest and is thus entitled to all the privileges and rights indicated by the term "priesthood."

The metaphor of the church as a priesthood not only implies privileges but responsibilities as well. The priesthood in the Old Testament was a hierarchy serving under the authority of the high priest. During the church age the believer is a priest unto God. All believers minister under the authority of Christ, who is the High Priest. In the Old Testament the service of the priests was limited to the divinely appointed ritual in the tabernacle or the temple; whereas in the church age, the priestly service of the believer includes not only a service to God but to fellow believers and to all men everywhere.

It should be noted that the believer priest is to render a service of sacrifice. The rendering of a sacrifice is not offering a sacrifice in atonement for sin, but an offering of spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ. This spiritual sacrifice is the offering up of his body to the service of God (Romans 12:1-2). According to Radmacher, "In

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35 Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter, 160.
36 Radmacher, What the Church Is All About, 292.
37 Chafer, Chafer Systematic Theology, 65.
contrast to the involuntary Old Testament sacrifices in which the animal was slain, this was to be a voluntary, living sacrifice that could therefore be set free by God to live as a sacrificial victim—one completely set apart to God."38 W. Arndt explains the service of the believer priest:

In the Old Testament the priests served before God in the tabernacle and the Temple; they had the right to enter the holy place; and one of them, the high priest, although only once a year, went into the Holy of Holies. Their relationship with God was more intimate and direct than that of the ordinary people. The priest represented Israel at the throne of mercy. In the New Testament every believer has the privilege of appearing directly before God and rendering Him holy service: no intermediary is required; with prayers, pleadings, and thanksgiving every believer, let him be ever so humble, can approach God; there is no barrier beyond which some may go, others not. The priesthood of all believers, so forcefully taught by Peter, is one of the glories of the New Covenant.

The high position is given Christians so that they may render service... The priests in the Old Testament, too, were not supposed to be drones; they were to give their time to the service of Jehovah. Let no one think that the plan of God in making priests of all New Testament believers was intended to lead them into a state of inactivity and indolence. Sacrifices are to be offered up by them. The laity, as well as the clergy, is to be active in this respect. In this point there is to be no difference—all are to offer holy sacrifices. The clergyman are not a higher class; they merely hold a special office and perform a special function, that of publicly, as the representatives of the congregation, preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments.39

The believer priest is to offer the service of worship. The believer priest in the church age is appointed to worship by and through Christ alone. Chafer states that "the believer's worship may be the offering of one's self to God (Rom. 12:1), the ascribing of praise and thanksgiving to God from the heart (Heb. 13:15), or the sacrificial

38Radmacher, What the Church Is All About, 295.
gifts that are offered to Him."40

Finally, the believer priest is to offer a two-fold outward expression consisting of the duty of benevolence and generosity and the duty of evangelism. These duties are necessary in that spiritual sacrifice must find an outward expression. The duty of benevolence and generosity is based upon Hebrews 13:16, where the phrase "to do good" is followed by the phrase "to share." "To share" comes from the Greek word κοινονία, which has a primary meaning of "fellowship." but in this case the word is translated with the idea of sharing with a brother in material need. The outward expression of evangelism is a service which is often overlooked by the believer priest. The apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:9 reasons that the believer priest should evangelize because he has been called out of the darkness of sin into the marvelous light of salvation. Also, the apostle Paul in Romans 15:16 uses the metaphor of the priesthood for evangelism. Paul speaks "of the grace given him by God. 'that I should be the minister [λειτουργός] of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering [Hierourgounta] the gospel of God. that the offering up [prosphora] of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.'"41

The Apostle Paul states in 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 [NKJV] that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. not imputing their trespasses to them. and has committed to us the word of reconciliation (19)." The "us" that God has given His ministry of reconciliation to are those who are in Christ as referred to in verse 17. "If anyone is in

40Chafer, Chafer Systematic Theology. 67.
41Radmacher. What the Church Is All About. 297.
Christ, he is a new creation.” Therefore, when we become one in Christ, then we are given the ministry of reconciliation. According to Charles Hodge, God has commissioned his ministers [laity] to announce to all men that God is reconciled and ready to forgive them. It is then obvious that all who are in Christ, both laity and professional clergy, are responsible for sharing their faith with others.

Thus, the New Testament believer in essence is a priest of God, possessing all the spiritual privileges which God has prepared for His Church. According to Arndt, “To them belong the Word and the Sacraments, the power of the keys, that is the power to open and close the gates of heaven and the right to call pastors and teachers.” However, the church was not founded on the principle that service or authority would be dictated to the many, nor was it to be a community of believers having special spiritual privileges. Arndt states, “All the children of God are priests, and to everyone belong the rights and privileges indicated by that term.”

The Church as an Organization

According to some writers the church should not be viewed as an organization but only as an organism. As Darrell W. Robinson explains, “In a general sense there is one church. It is not an organization—it is an organism. It does not have organic unity—it has spiritual

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44 Ibid.
unity."\(^{45}\) In the New Testament conclusive evidence can be found for the existence of at least a loose organizational structure in the local church, particularly in the church at Jerusalem. A number of factors give evidence to the church as an organization. The early Jerusalem church believers adhered to a definite doctrinal standard (Acts 2:42), met for spiritual fellowship, united in prayer, practiced baptism, observed the Lord's Supper, kept account of the membership, met for public worship, and provided material help for the needy of their number (Acts 2:41-46). The apostles were the leaders in this church, but soon they added seven men to take care of the ministration to the poor (Acts 6:1-7). On the day of Pentecost they were assembled in the upper room (Acts 1:13; 2:1), wherever that may have been. More often, however, they seem to have met in some home of a Christian (Acts 2:46; 12:12), though for some services apparently they still visited the temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1). All these factors indicate the beginnings of organization in the Jerusalem church.\(^{46}\)

According to Henry C. Thiessen, there are many factors in Scripture that show that New Testament believers were organized in local churches. These factors include the following: church officers; stated times of meeting; a regulated church decorum; money raised for the Lord's work; and letters of commendation to the other churches.\(^{47}\)

Thiessen points out that an organization has officers, and the New Testament suggests that there were perhaps three distinct offices in the early church. First, the office of pastor, elder, and overseer are three distinct terms but denote one and the same office in the New Testament. Second, there was the office of deacon, whose duties were to


\(^{47}\)Ibid., 318-319.
care for the physical needs of the church. Third, there were deaconesses, who were devoted to the caring of the sick, making arrangements for the common meals, lending aid and distributing alms and in general helping in areas where a woman could best be utilized.\textsuperscript{48}

Thiessen further states that an organization has government. There are three basic types of church government: the episcopal, the presbyterial, and the congregational. Each of these forms of government finds support from Scripture, but the point to be stressed is that each local congregation was organized and involved in all the affairs of the local church. Therefore, whatever delegated authority existed in the church, it did not ignore the needs of the organism [the body].\textsuperscript{49} Furthermore, organization provides structure in order to fulfill the purposes of the church.

\textbf{The Church as an Institution}

In order to gain a better understanding of the church, one needs to consider its institutional structure. Many scholars would not consider the church as an institution, for to do so would be to examine the church from a sociological rather than a biblical viewpoint. The membership of the church is made up of fallible human beings who are fascinated with religion and are often attracted to becoming part of its membership, though they may not always confess Christ as Lord and Savior. Therefore, the membership of the local church often includes both imperfect saints and unbelievers with all their faults and

\textsuperscript{48}Thiessen, \textit{Lectures in Systematic Theology}, 321.

\textsuperscript{49}Ibid., 322.
weaknesses (Matthew 13:36-43). According to Greg Ogden, the term "institution" as applied to the church may be interpreted in two ways. First, institution means order or the need of organization within the organism of the body of Christ. Secondly, the term also means that "the ministry of the church [is] defined from the top-down viewpoint of its official leaders as opposed to the bottom-up perspective of God's people."50 Institutionalism is not a phenomenon that is exclusive to the church or other Christian organizations. Institutionalism appears to develop when a people band together in order to achieve common goals and objectives. "People, plus structure, plus age, seemingly, more often than not, equals institutionalism."51

In his book *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, Gene Getz lists some of the symptoms of institutionalism. These symptoms are reflective of an organization that is already deeply entrenched in institutionalism. The form and structure of the organization becomes more important than the people who make up its membership. People in the organization begin to function more like machines. Individuality and creativity are often lost in the structure. The atmosphere within the organization becomes threatening rather than open and free, and people are afraid to ask uncomfortable questions. The structural arrangements in the organization become rigid and inflexible. The members of the organization serve the organization rather than the objectives for which the organization was brought into existence.


Communication often breaks down because of a repressive atmosphere and red tape. People become prisoners to the "policy manual" and the "rule book;" therefore, fresh ideas are not developed. In order to survive, people in the organization have the tendency to develop their own special interests within the organization, thereby creating competition within other structures of the organization. The overall objective of the organization falls to the unrelated objectives of the special interests, resulting in a lack of unity within the framework of the organization. Morale in the organization declines, people lose the initiative, and discouragement sets within the leadership. Finally, the process of institutionalism increases as the organization enlarges. The increase in size and the development of a hierarchy of leadership often create communication problems within the structural organization of the church. The people at the bottom or even in the middle of the organizational structure feel as if they "really don't count."52

Symptoms of institutionalism have become established in the evangelical church. These symptoms are not characteristic of all evangelical churches, but they can be found in many churches. The first symptom is the failure to provide balanced New Testament experiences for believers. The evangelical church has emphasized correct doctrine and knowledge of Scripture while neglecting other important needs such as Christian maturity. Emphasizing the Bible as the Word of God, teaching correct doctrines, studying the Bible, and witnessing are worthy Biblical objectives. However, a problem has arisen in that the functioning body of Christ has replaced the laymen with a trained and

52Getz, Sharpening the Focus of the Church, 193-194.
gifted man. For the most part, many laymen have become merely "listeners."

Gene Getz suggests that to meet its objectives, the evangelical church employs trained, qualified people from Bible Institutes, colleges, and seminaries. These schools have a curriculum that is designed to teach young people a knowledge of the content of Scripture so that they might be able to teach others. After training in these schools, these people go into churches and teach as they were taught. In the process our churches have turned into miniature Bible schools and seminaries. The laymen who were the "listeners," the ones who absorbed the Word of God, eventually lost their outlet to minister to the local body. 53

The second symptom of institutionalism in evangelical churches is the emphasis placed upon the church as a soul-winning station. This symptom is characterized by the pastors who emphasize bringing unsaved people to church in order to hear the gospel message. Therefore, the laymen receive the message that they are brought in to hear the gospel.

It should be stressed that the basic objective of the church is evangelism, to reach the unsaved world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This does not mean that non-Christians should not be invited to church services. However, it does mean that the purpose of the church as described in the New Testament is not evangelism, but edification. Therefore, when the non-Christian attends a church service, he/she should observe the body of Christ functioning properly in order to build itself up. The non-Christian will then be in a position to become

53Getz, Sharpening the Focus of the Church, 202-204.
convicted by the Holy Spirit and respond to the message of the gospel. Gene Getz describes how worship services should function.

..."Why" Christians meet is of utmost importance! From a biblical point of view, it is not to listen to a pastor preach the gospel to unsaved people. Nor is it to just listen to the pastor-teacher expound the Word. Rather, it is to be a time when believers edify themselves through total body function. It is to be a time when the Word of God is taught. But it is also to be a time when believers are to experience true "family of God" relationships. As a result of these vital experiences, they are in turn to go out and minister to their own families, minister to other believers, and be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ in the unsaved world.54

The third symptom of institutionalism found in evangelical churches centers around the fact that we are more concerned with our existence than our cause for existence. This symptom is reflected in the way that we measure success. "As long as we have lots of activity, lots of people coming, lots of 'decisions,' an enlarging income, a growing pastoral staff, and an ongoing building program—we feel comfortably successful and evangelical."55 Also, this symptom is reflected in the way we measure spirituality, particularly among the pastoral staff. Once again Getz states,

Our people "measure up" as long as they come and listen to our sermons, bring their children to all the activities we've planned for them, support the church with their offerings, willingly serve on boards and committees, and help keep the agencies of the church functioning by filling leadership slots. In short, as long as people support the program, we evaluate them as spiritually mature.56

The fourth symptom of institutionalism often found in evangelical churches is emphasizing correct doctrine while neglecting the quality of one's life. This symptom is evidenced by the fact that the lifestyle of

54Getz. Sharpening the Focus of the Church. 206-207.

55Ibid., 207.

56Ibid.
some church members does not differ from the lifestyle of non-
Christians. In other words, the fruit of the Spirit is not demonstrated
in their lives. Also, this symptom is further compounded by the fact
that many evangelical churches have developed a legal system that
reflects some of the same beliefs of the Pharisees. Therefore,
spiritual depth is measured by the externals, the "thou shalt nots,"
which in some Christian circles are considered the standards. Gene Getz
explains, "If Christians don't do certain things, they are automatically
classified as spiritual. It is possible, of course, to refrain from
many activities and be extremely carnal, and yet to feel 'comfortably
spiritual.'" On the other hand, there can be too much liberty:
however, both extremes, legalism and liberty are symptomatic of
institutionalized Christianity.

The fifth symptom of institutionalism in evangelical churches is
that the nonabsolutes have become absolute. In other words, what is
meant to be a means to an end becomes the end in itself. Traditionalism
becomes the standard, and is, therefore, the absolute standard for
ministry. An effective ministry in our contemporary society is
dependent upon a change in structures and patterns. However, there are
biblical absolutes that cannot change such as doctrine, the purpose of
the church, qualifications for leadership, etc. According to Getz,
Scriptural evidence shows that New Testament Christians did not consider
certain forms, patterns and structures to be absolute. 58

57 Getz, Sharpening the Focus of the Church, 209.
58 Ibid., 210.
The Contemporary Church

In order to understand the contemporary church in America, one must analyze the changes taking effect in these churches. The first change taking place in American churches is the decline of membership in mainline denominations. Leith Anderson gives the following example: "The United Methodist Church... had a vision for starting numerous churches and winning many converts. In 1960 that denomination had over 9 million members and 7.8 million in Sunday schools. By 1984, however, Sunday school attendance dropped to 4.15 million and in 1992 there were 8.8 million members." Anderson also noted that of the approximately 350,000 churches in the United States, between 50 and 60 churches close every week.

This decline of the church can be noted in the fact that many churches are in a struggle for survival. The churches in this country are mostly small and rural with fewer than 75 at worship services on an average Sunday. In order to support a full time pastor, most churches need an average attendance of 125. Therefore, smaller churches are being forced to hire part-time pastors, merge, or close. This problem is compounded by the fact that the enrollment in seminaries and Bible colleges is shrinking. Also, churches are no longer looking to denominations for vision and leadership.

The second change taking place in American churches is the growth

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60 Ibid.
61 Ibid, 7-8.
of the megachurch, which is a church that averages 2,000 at worship service. There are currently 300 megachurches in the United States with another church joining the ranks of this movement every week. The megachurch is beginning to replace the functions of denominations particularly in the area of vision and leadership. The megachurches are setting the direction for style of worship, methods of evangelism, training of clergy, and some are printing curriculum and materials. These churches are also offering theological degrees, starting new congregations, sponsoring training conferences, operating publishing houses, sponsoring foundations, operating radio and television stations, and directing their own missionary-sending agencies. Also, these churches recruit from their own laity when additional staff members are needed.62

According to Anderson, the distinguishing characteristic of the megachurches is their effectiveness and complexity. The reason these churches become large is that they tend to be effective at what they do. However, when they cease to be effective, they usually become smaller; whereas smaller churches that are highly effective often become larger. He further states, "As churches become larger they also become complex with a different organizational system and multiplied social relationships among diverse groups of people."63 This complexity is shown by the fact that megachurches are organized differently, people relate differently, and they minister differently. However, it should be noted that megachurches are not large versions of small churches.

63Ibid. 8.
The third change taking place in American churches is the disappearance of the protestant ethic and biblical literacy, which have been characteristic of this country for over two hundred years. However, the people whom churches now seek to evangelize are less prepared to receive the gospel message than people were in the past. The evangelistic and ecclesiastical methodologies are structured for the pre-World War II generation, who were more likely to think deductively and systemically and had a deferred gratification ethic. Conversely, the post World War II generation "Baby busters." those born after 1964, think inductively and eclectically and have an instant gratification ethic. "To be effective with the baby buster generation requires an increase in inductive reasoning and communication, an issue-by-issue customized approach to needs and questions, and an emphasis on the present power of the gospel of Jesus Christ."\(^6^4\)

The fourth change taking place in American churches is a greater demand on the leadership of the professional clergy and greater participation by the laity. The priesthood of all believers and the empowerment of the laity for ministry has long been preached by American Protestantism but rarely practiced. As noted in the institutionalization of the church, the peculiarities and perquisites of the clergy have been perpetuated. For example, the special training, special titles, and special ordination to ministry have set the professional clergy apart from the laity.\(^6^5\)

In this chapter the theological and sociological aspects of the


\(^{6^5}\)Ibid. 9-10.
church were examined. The nature of the church has been described through its imagery as "the People of God." "the body of Christ." "the Bride of Christ." "the Temple of God." "the Priesthood," "the Flock," and "the Vine and the Branches." It should be noted that the ultimate purpose of the church is to bring honor and glory to its head Jesus Christ. The church has an organizational structure based upon evidence found in the New Testament. Also, the church should be considered as having an institutional structure because the membership of the local church includes imperfect saints and unbelievers. Finally, the contemporary church those with fewer than 75 at worship services are in a struggle for survival. Whereas, the megachurch 2,000 at worship services are setting the direction for worship, evangelism, training, and education.
CHAPTER 3
THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PASTORS

The Professional Pastor and the Priesthood of the Believer

According to J.B. Lightfoot, "It must be evident that no society of men could hold together without officers, without rules, without institutions of any kind; and the Church is not exempt from this universal law."¹ Lightfoot is asserting that the Church cannot fulfill its purposes without a ministry of rulers and teachers. These officers are necessary for the purpose of communicating instruction and preserving public order. However, it should be noted that the priestly functions and privileges have not been transferred or delegated to these officers. As Lightfoot states, "The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood."² In other words, all Christians are priests alike.

Lightfoot defines the word "priest" in the following manner. First, the word "priest" is a synonym for presbyter and elder. The terms "presbyter" and "elder" are designations for the Christian minister who presides and instructs a Christian congregation. Secondly,

²Ibid., 184-185.

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the word "priest" is equivalent to the Latin sacerdos, who offers sacrifices and performs mediatorial offices between God and man.³ Lightfoot affirms that the sacerdotal functions and privileges pertain to all believers alike and not solely or specifically to the ministerial office.⁴

Lightfoot makes the following observation about whether the Christian ministry can be called a priesthood. The Christian ministry, if it is a priesthood, is a priesthood of a type that is different from the Jewish priesthood.⁵ Lightfoot notes that the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of priests and sacrifices in their Jewish and Christian context. The prominent function of the priestly office was offering sacrifice and thereby making an atonement. As noted by Lightfoot, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that all sacrifices are consummated in the one Sacrifice and all priesthoods have been absorbed in the one Priest, who is Jesus Christ. Lightfoot further clarifies the concept of Christian sacrifice in Hebrews:

Strictly accordant too with the general tenour of his argument is the language used throughout by the writer of this epistle. He speaks of Christian sacrifices, of a Christian altar; but the sacrifices are praise and thanksgiving and well-doing, the altar is apparently the Cross of Christ. If the Christian ministry were a sacerdotal office, if the holy eucharist were a sacerdotal act, in the same sense in which the Jewish priesthood and the Jewish sacrifice were sacerdotal, then his argument is faulty and his language misleading. Though dwelling at great length on the Christian counterparts to the Jewish priest, the Jewish altar, the Jewish sacrifice, he omits to mention the one office, the one place, the one act, which on this showing would be their truest and liveliest counterparts in the every-day worship of the Church of

³Lightfoot. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians. 186.
⁴Ibid., 244.
⁵Ibid., 264.
Christ. He has rejected these, and he has chosen instead moral and spiritual analogies for all these sacred types. Thus in what he has said and in what he has left unsaid alike, his language points to one and the same result.

If therefore the sacerdotal office be understood to imply the offering of sacrifices, then the Epistle to the Hebrews leaves no place for a Christian priesthood. If on the other hand the word be taken in a wider and looser acceptation, it cannot well be withheld from the ministry of the Church of Christ. Lightfoot concludes that the broader meaning of the term "priest" may be "one who represents God to man and man to God." The Christian ministry satisfies both of these conditions. First, God called the man to the office. Secondly, the Christian minister "is the representative of man to God—of the congregation primarily, of the individual indirectly as a member of the congregation."

Thomas Oden states that the general ministry of the church is not challenged or threatened by ordained ministry. He notes further that although the priesthood belongs to the whole body of Christ, every baptized member has not been called to preach and counsel. Oden quotes Martin Luther from his Commentary on Psalm 110:

For although we are all priests, this does not mean that all of us can preach, teach, and rule. Certain ones of the multitude must be selected and separated for such an office. . . . This is the way to distinguish between the office of preaching or the ministry, and the general priesthood of all baptized Christians. The preaching office is no more than a public service which happens to be conferred upon someone by the entire congregation, all the members of which are

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6Lightfoot. St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 265-266.

7Ibid., 267.

8Ibid., 267-268.

According to Oden, the priesthood of all believers does not necessarily imply that anyone can assume to themselves a representative ministry. Quoting Luther from *The Babylonian Captivity*, Oden states, "No one may make use of this power except by the consent of the community or by the call of a superior." Thus, Oden concludes that all believers are not called to sacred or public ministry, because there are special requirements for the public ministry especially teaching and celebration of sacraments. Once again Oden cites Luther from his "Exposition on John 20:19-31: "The congregation chooses a suitable person, who administers the Sacrament, preaches, hears confession, and baptizes. To be sure, all of us possess this power: but no one except him who is chosen by the congregation to do so should presume to practice it publicly."

**The Role of the Professional Pastor**

It is apparent from the following information that Martin Luther and other biblical scholars such as J.B. Lightfoot and Thomas C. Oden see a place for pastors who have been called and set apart to serve the general ministry of the church by performing the functions of preaching, teaching, counseling, and administering the sacraments. Therefore, what functions are assigned to the professional pastor and not assigned to

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10 Oden, *Becoming a Minister*, 83.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., 86.
the laity? According to Thomas Oden.

There is not one standard for clergy and another for laity, but rather the clergy are merely asked to practice what they preach, to hold to the morality they proclaim, so that they will not be a scandal to the rest of the community seeking to embody the same moral claims. The rigor of life under orders does not imply a different morality than for laity, but it does seek to manifest a leadership style, and to prevent priests from thinking they can do as they please, as if the office itself granted license. 14

In summary all believers are priests; however, not all believer priests should be pastors.

What then should be the role of the professional pastor in consideration of the priesthood of the believer? It is apparent that all believers, laity and professional pastors, are priests by being in Christ. Oden cites Luther's Sermon on John I: "Ministers of the church, on the other hand, have different names and are called apostles, evangelists, bishops, presbyters, shepherds, etc. Such names they bear, not because of any sacrificing but because of their preaching and other services which must be continued in the church." 15

The New Testament uses seven different names that identify the role of the professional pastor: elder, bishop, shepherd/pastor, preacher, teacher, servant/slave, and messenger. Each of the seven terms will be examined, defined, and researched according to its usage in reference to the New Testament church in order to gain a better understanding of the role of the professional pastor.

Elder

The term "elder" is used over twenty different times in the New

14Oden, Becoming a Minister, 91.

15Ibid., 98-99.
Testament (excluding the Gospels). The word is used in two different ways. First, the term is used in reference to age. For example, an elder is an individual who is the oldest of two sons (Luke 15:25). When the term is used in reference to age, it could mean a period of time, for example, "the men of old" or "our ancestors" (Hebrews 11:2). The second usage of the term is for the designation of officials such as presidents, members of various guilds, committees, village officials, executive committees of priests, and senior groups of different types. An example of such usage would be in reference to the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin. In the Jewish and Christian sphere, it is often hard to distinguish between the designation of age and the designation of office. For example, in Genesis 18:11-12, John 8:9, and Acts 2:17, the term "elder" is used to denote age. Yet in Matthew 15:2 the term "elder" denotes the bearers of a tradition. Still at other times the term is used in reference to members of governing bodies as in the nation, the synagogue, or the church.

In order to understand the use of the term "elder" in the New Testament, one must first consider its use in the Old Testament. The term "elder" is used in the Old Testament to distinguish mature men, both the physically mature and the spiritually mature. In Exodus 12:21, "elder" is used to designate the heads of families; whereas in Exodus

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18:20-21. the elders are men of strong moral character who feared God. Elders in Numbers 11:16-17 are men full of the spirit. Also, in Deuteronomy 1:13-17, the elders are characterized as being capable, wise, discerning, experienced, impartial, and courageous; they were men who would intercede, teach, and judge fairly the children of Israel. All of these characteristics were involved in the Jewish understanding of an elder. The beginning of the New Testament church was Jewish, and the idea of elder was apparently adopted by the Jerusalem church. According to John MacArthur,

_Elder_ was the only commonly used Jewish term for leadership that was free from any connotation of either the monarchy or the priesthood. That is significant, because in the church, each believer is a co-regent with Christ, so there could be no earthly king. And unlike national Israel, the church has no specially designated earthly priesthood, for all believers are priests. So of all the Jewish concepts of leadership, the elder best transfers to the kind of leadership ordained for the church.\(^\text{18}\)

It is apparent from Acts 11:29-30 that a group of mature spiritual leaders had responsibility in the New Testament church. The church of Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to the elders of the church in Jerusalem with a gift to be distributed to the needy in the congregation. This act demonstrates that both churches recognized elders as spiritual leaders in the church. Acts 14:23 tells of Paul and Barnabas appointing or ordaining elders in Gentile churches. In Acts 15 elders play a major role in the Council of Jerusalem, for they are mentioned alongside the apostles. It should be noted here as well that the elders and the apostles function after the manner of the Jewish Sanhedrin. Also, according to Acts 11:30 and Acts 21:18, the elders represent the

congregation like a synagogue council. Acts 20:17 and 1 Peter 5:1-2, confirm that many early churches had elders including Miletus, Ephesus, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

From a brief survey of how the term was used in the New Testament, it is apparent that "elder" was used to designate a specific office holder in the church. It also appears that there was a plurality of elders in each church.

The role of the elder included the following responsibilities. First, according to James 5:14, the elders should anoint and pray for the sick. These were not older believers but officeholders with a gift of healing and intercessory prayer. Second, Acts 20:18 ff. shows that elders were overseers and pastors administering the apostles' legacy, following their example and protecting the people from error. Third, 1 Peter 5:1 ff. shows Peter addressing elders and younger believers as though they were age groups, but it is obvious that the elders were a college of officebearers with a pastoral function. It is noted in 1 Peter 5:2-3 that the elders had charge of funds and exercise authority. Furthermore, it is apparent that their powers were not autonomous, for they were accountable to Christ. Fourth, in 1 Timothy 5:17, elders were to be rewarded if they ruled well, and they were to be protected from frivolous charges (1 Timothy 5:19). Lastly, preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17) were special functions of some of the elders; and, therefore, two classes of elders were indicated, ruling elders and teaching elders.

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The word "bishop" is used five times in the New Testament (Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25). The primary meaning of the word is that of "overseer." It is used when referring to God as being an overseer and of persons who have a definite function or a fixed office within a group. According to 1 Peter 2:25, the word is used in reference to Christ as being the bishop (overseer) of our souls. Thus, the term is suggesting the pastoral work of watching over or guarding the souls. The term combined with Shepherd conveys the idea of Christ's total self-offering in caring for the souls of His people.

In Acts 20:28 the apostle Paul describes the office of bishop as an office with a specific function. It is also apparent from the usage of the word in this verse that the bishop or bishops were leaders in settled churches. However, it should be noted that Paul uses the word in the plural, and the King James version translation of the word is "overseers" not "bishops." As used in Philippians 1:1, the word "bishop" refers to a definite office, not just an activity. According to 1 Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:7, the word "bishop" is used to describe a definite office with definite qualifications; however, there is no list of functions mentioned.

From the above information, one can determine that the bishop is

an office holder in a local assembly. Further, the bishop receives admonition and must be sober and disciplined. It is obvious that his authority comes from the Holy Spirit.

The bishop of a church had three primary roles: ruling (Romans 12:8), overseeing (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2), and caring for the flock of God (Acts 20:28). Romans 12:8 describes the bishop’s role as "... he that ruleth with diligence: he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." The phrase "he that ruleth with diligence" applies to those "who exercise government and oversight in the church." However, it should be noted that neither bishop nor elder is mentioned in the verse, so this description could apply to either bishop or elder. According to R.C.H. Lenski, "This may be a reference to the elder [bishop] in a congregation, to a member of the church council, to the chairman of a committee, to anyone who is placed at the head of others for the purpose of performing some task." The second and third duties of the bishop are concerned with the overseeing and caring for the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). The bishop is to carry on the work that Christ began, which is to oversee His sheep.

The scriptural qualifications for a bishop are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. However, many commentators believe that these qualifications are also the qualifications for an elder. This issue will be further examined when considering the relationships among elder.

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bishop, and pastor.

Today many churches choose their spiritual leaders according to executive abilities, financial success, public relations skills, etc.; however, bishops should be chosen because of their spiritual qualifications. In the given passages God has laid down explicit qualifications for a bishop in the church. In both passages the word "blameless" is used, apparently stressing the fact that the bishop is to be an example to those in his church. The concept behind the word "blameless" is to be irreproachable. Further, Paul reveals specific qualifications in the four given areas.

The first major area deals with the moral qualifications. The bishop is to be the "husband of one wife." This qualification requires that the bishop be a loyal husband living in a good and stable marriage relationship. He is not involved and has not been involved in adulterous relationships or attitudes. However, it is not mandatory that the bishop be married. The bishop is to be "vigilant," or better translated, "temperate," meaning that the bishop is not given over to any excesses in his life. The third qualification in this category is that a bishop is to be "sober." That is, he is to be sensible and of sound mind: he is to be of "good behavior," and have a well-ordered life. He is not "self-willed," meaning that he is not interested in his own self-pleasure, but rather he is concerned with service. He is to be "temperate," meaning he masters himself by being self-controlled. He is just and holy: specifically, he performs his duty towards man and God. Lastly, he is "not covetous" and "not greedy of filthy lucre," meaning he is free from the love of money. His life will not be consumed with
accumulating material things and wealth.

The second given area deals with his family life. The bishop is to "ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" (1 Timothy 3:4-5). Children must be under the control of the father, following in his faith. Also, the bishop must rule his entire household well.

The third given area deals with interpersonal relationships of the bishop. The bishop is "not given to wine;" he cannot even be a social drinker. He is not a "striker," nor is he quick tempered. He is to be "patient" and "not a brawler." He is "hospitable:" that is, he opens his home to others, particularly those in need. He is "a lover of good men." For example, he desires to have a good relationship with all and a good attitude toward all. Finally, he must have the "good report of them which are without:" that is to say, he should not be considered a hypocrite to those outside of the church.

The fourth given area deals with spiritual qualifications. The bishop is "not a novice," meaning he is not a recent convert to Jesus Christ. This qualification alone demands spiritual maturity as a prerequisite for service as a bishop. The fact that the bishop is "apt to teach" requires a knowledge of sound biblical doctrine with the ability to use it to instruct, to exhort, and to refute. This qualification demands that he also be teachable in order that he may be able to teach others.

Shepherd/Pastor

The term "pastor" appears only once in the New Testament
(Ephesians 4:11), while the term "shepherd" occurs over twenty-five times in both singular and plural forms. The terms "shepherd" and "pastor" are translations of the same Greek word poimen. In the New Testament this word is used in two different ways. First, it is used literally to identify the one(s) who tends to a flock of sheep. Secondly, it is used figuratively to signify the one who protects, governs, leads, guides, and rules a congregation.

As already stated, the term "pastors" is used in Ephesians 4:11 (KJV): "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." According to many New Testament scholars, the pastors and teachers were a single group of ministers. For example, William Hendriksen states, "Pastors and teachers are best considered one group." A. Skevington Wood argues, "'Pastors and teachers' are grouped together in such a way as to suggest that the two roles are regarded as complementary and often coordinated in the same person."

The term "shepherd" was the term used by Jesus to best explain His character and office. It is also the term that Jesus used when designating Peter as leader of the apostles (John 21:15 ff.). As Charles Jefferson explains,

Peter was a fisherman and could have best understood, presumably, the language native to a fisherman's lips, but Jesus in His final charge to the son of Jonas used only the vocabulary of the sheepfold: "Feed my lambs. Tend my sheep. Feed my sheep." In

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other words: "Be a shepherd. and do a shepherd’s work."\textsuperscript{27}

Therefore, the New Testament describes the shepherd/pastor duties as threefold. First, he was to care for the flock. Secondly, he was to seek the lost. Lastly, he was to combat doctrinal error. It is clear that Peter never forgot what Christ taught him about being a shepherd, because he reiterates this idea in 1 Peter 5:2-4.

The Apostle Paul also used the shepherd terminology. Paul looked upon men with the eyes of a shepherd. To him, every church was a sheepfold; and the men who were the leaders of each church were shepherds (Acts 20:28). Jefferson further explains,

The shepherd idea, then, may be said to color the entire New Testament world, to permeate its atmosphere and to flow in its blood. The generation of Christians molded by the Apostles was trained to think of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and the church leaders instructed by Peter and Paul went forth as shepherds to feed and tend Christ’s sheep.\textsuperscript{29}

According to Charles Jefferson, the shepherd/pastor is to be a watchman, a guard, a guide, a physician to the sheep, a savior, a feeder of the sheep, and a lover of the sheep.\textsuperscript{29} It is apparent from the New Testament that the role of the shepherd/pastor involves both shepherding and teaching. In his book, \textit{Sharpening the Focus of the Church}, Gene Getz explains the function of the shepherd/pastor.

\textit{Pastors} or shepherds were those who gave special help to new churches. They were also teachers that helped both in the organization of the church as well as in its growth through the process of instruction. In the first century church they seemingly had a foundational ministry, along with the others who had the

\textsuperscript{27}Charles Jefferson, \textit{The Minister as Shepherd} (Fincastle: Scripture Truth Book Co., n.d.), 16.

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., 18.

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., 41-66.
greater gifts. They went from church to church assisting in the appointment of local leadership, and making sure the church learned the basic doctrines of Christianity. 

It is also apparent that the Chief Shepherd [Jesus Christ] is the example (1 Peter 5:3), for the shepherd/pastor to follow. By following the example of the Chief Shepherd, the shepherd/pastor will receive recognition from Christ at His Second Coming (1 Peter 5:4).

In the New Testament the offices of elder, bishop, and pastor are designations for the same individual. According to Acts 14:23, Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in the Gentile churches. Acts 20:28 ff. says that the elders are to be overseers and pastors, administering the apostles' legacy, following their example and protecting the people [flock] from error. However, in this verse the elders are designated as bishops. The Apostle Peter, in 1 Peter 5:1 ff, addresses the elders and younger believers as though these were age groups; but it is obvious that the elders are a college of officebearers with a pastoral function. Peter goes on to say that these officebearers are to have charge of funds and exercise authority. However, their powers are not autonomous, for they are responsible to Christ who is called the "chief Shepherd" [pastor] (1 Peter 5:4).

According to J.H. Thayer in his Greek-English lexicon, the elders did not differ at all from the bishops or overseers, because the two words are used indiscriminately in Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5, 7. He also states that, "the title episkopos denotes the function, presbyteros, the dignity" of the office. Also, Henry C. Thiessen

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discusses the use of the three terms in the New Testament:

These three terms denote one and the same office in the New Testament. In Acts 20:17, 28 the elders of the church at Ephesus are said to have been made overseers (or bishops) over the flock, with the purpose that they should feed (shepherd or pastor) the church of God. Here we have the terms elders, overseers, and pastors all used of the same men. In 1 Pet. 5:1f. the duties of a pastor are assigned to "the elders among you." That is, the two were one and the same. Both John (2 John 1; 3 John 1) and Peter (1 Pet. 5:1) were apostles, and yet they call themselves elders. Surely, this did not imply and office inferior to that of pastor or overseer. In Titus 1:5-9 the terms "elder" and "overseer" are used interchangeably. The Greek term "shepherd" occurs several times in the New Testament, but only in Eph. 4:11 is it translated "pastor." Its real meaning is that of shepherd (cf. Matt. 9:36; 26:31; Luke 2:8; John 10:2; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25). As has been pointed out, the elders and overseers in the church at Ephesus had been entrusted with the work of shepherding the flock, that is, they had been made pastors in the church. Paul addresses the church at Philippi, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons" (Phil. 1:1). If there had been elders and pastors in that church, distinct from the overseers, Paul would have addressed only a part of the officials of the church, an unlikely supposition.\(^{32}\)

Preacher

The term "preacher" is defined as a herald, whose duty is to make public proclamations.\(^{33}\) The term is used three times in the New Testament. In 2 Peter 2:5, Noah is called a "preacher of righteousness." Then in 1 Timothy 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:11, Paul is called a "preacher and apostle." J.H. Thayer defines a preacher as


"God's ambassador, and the herald or proclaimer of the divine word."  

Since the term "preacher" is used only three times in the New Testament, it is almost impossible to gain a good understanding of its usage. However, it should be noted that the focus of the New Testament is upon the message and not the preacher. God Himself is the real Messenger; and His death, burial, and resurrection reveal the message. In addition, the Greek concept of "preacher" is not well defined. New Testament preachers cannot claim inviolability, that is to say, they are not sacred nor necessarily above reproach. They can be like sheep among wolves (Matthew 10:16). They can be persecuted like Jesus (John 15:20). Also, if they are dedicated to the message, they are faithful to the death (Revelation 12:11). For these reasons, it is best to describe the position of "preacher" by what he does: he preaches the message of Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament sense, a preacher can be defined as a "man who has the inner call from the Holy Ghost and the external call from the church, the witnessing body of Christ on earth, and has been duly set apart as an accredited and qualified teacher of the Christian religion." 35 The vocation of the preacher should be that of addressing the mind and the heart about religious truth as set forth by the Word of God. The preacher should speak as a personal witness of God's saving truth through Jesus Christ, explaining and applying it as the

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circumstances of the people and the times may require. Scripture does place certain limitations upon the preacher. First, he is not to speak on his own but as the mouthpiece of God. Secondly, his faith is based upon doctrine that is founded in the Word of God. Thirdly, he is not to expound any doctrine distinct from or opposed to that which is found in the Word of God.

The message of the preacher is to be related to the Old and New Testaments. "The preacher is a man with a message, and the preacher who has no message of the particular kind indicated above is in no true sense a preacher." The message of the preacher is to come from a Divine compulsion, according to 1 Corinthians 9:16 and Acts 4:19, 20. That is, the message is to come from God and not from man. According to 2 Timothy 4:2, the preacher is to "preach the Word," meaning that the message is to be from the Word of God. Also, 2 Corinthians 5:20 says we are "ambassadors:" therefore, the work of preaching is a divinely instituted ambassadorship for the church. According to 1 Thessalonians 2:4, the preacher is a trustee of the Gospel. The preacher then is to present with integrity the truth found embodied in the Word of God. As a trustee of the Gospel, the preacher should administer God's Word in order to reveal the Christian faith; his message is not merely some type of human teaching. "Those who have accepted this office... are enjoined to exercise their office so as to warrant approbation of Him who has appointed them to a specific work." 37


37Ibid.
Teacher

The term "teacher" is used fifty-eight times in the New Testament, forty-eight times in the Gospels. There are forty-one references to Jesus as "teacher," twenty-nine of which are in the form of a direct address. The term in the plural form "teachers" (Acts 13:1; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Ephesians 4:11) is used to designate a group in the church. The Apostle Paul called himself a teacher (1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11).

The references for "teacher" or "teachers" found in the book of Acts and in the Epistles are in keeping with Jewish and early Christian usage. The word "teacher" is found in the Greek Septuagint in Esther 6:1, where it means "one who gives direction in the way of God." In James 3:1, the "teacher" is the expositor of the law who makes a right fulfillment possible. In 1 Corinthians 12:28-29, Ephesians 4:11, and Acts 13:1, "teachers" are mentioned after or with the apostles and prophets. They are considered to be the expositors who edify by their clear understanding of the Word of God. According to 1 Timothy 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:11, the work of teaching constituted a large part of the Apostle Paul's ministry.

It is apparent from the New Testament that there is to be a teacher in the church (Acts 13:1), and that the man or men who hold this position have the task of explaining the Christian faith to others as they provide an exposition of the Word of God. In Ephesians 4:11 Paul says, "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some

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evangelists: and some, pastors and teachers." It appears that Paul is connecting the positions of pastor and teacher together. Therefore, it is obvious that the positions of elder, bishop, shepherd/pastor, and teacher can be the same individual. Concerning pastors and teachers, R.C.H. Lenski states.

[Paul] makes one class of "shepherds and teachers," i.e., pastors of local congregations who were commonly called "elders" (the Ephesian elders, Acts 20:17) and termed... "overseers" (our "bishops"), by Paul himself in Acts 20:28 when he tells them "to shepherd the church of God." In John 21:15, etc., Jesus used both "pasture" and "shepherd" my sheep. The latter is wider and includes the former, but the former is important enough to be mentioned separately. It is the feeding by means of teaching, hence "teachers" is the second term added by Paul. In I Tim. 5:17 note the elders "presiding well-especially laboring in word and teaching."39

Servant/Slave

The Greek word _doulos_ is translated in the New Testament as "slave" or "servant." The word "slave" can be taken literally in the sense of being in contrast "to the master." "to a free man," "the house slave in contrast to the son" (John 8:35; Galatians 4:7). and "to a Christian brother" (Philemon 16).40 It is also used figuratively to describe the Apostles, who are the slaves of the Christians because they are unconditionally obligated to serve them (2 Corinthians 4:5). In this same sense, Christ, the heavenly Lord, appears on earth in the "form of a slave" (Philippians 2:7).41

According to J.H. Thayer, _doulos_ is a "slave," "a bondman," or a

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41Ibid.
"man of servile condition."\textsuperscript{42} Thayer defines a "slave" as one who gives himself up wholly to another's will. Thayer further notes the usage of "slave" in the New Testament in the following manner. First, it is used to identify those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men. Secondly, it is used in reference to the Apostles (Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:10; Philippians 1:1; 2 Timothy 2:24; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1). Thirdly, it refers to other preachers and teachers of the Gospel (Colossians 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:24; Jude 1). Fourthly, it alludes to the true worshippers of Christ. Lastly, it is used in the phrase "douloi of Theos," which are those whose agency God employs in executing His purposes.\textsuperscript{43}

Another term used in the New Testament is "servant." It is a translation of the Greek word diakonos, which means "servant" or "deacon." The Apostle is a servant of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:23) or of God in a special way with special cares and responsibilities (1 Corinthians 6:3 ff.). Through his ministry, Timothy is a servant of God (1 Thessalonians 3:1 ff.) or of Christ (1 Timothy 4:6). The Apostle Paul calls himself a servant of the church (Colossians 1:25) because of his divine commission. He and Apollos are servants of God and the church as they use their gifts to bring people to faith (1 Corinthians 3:5).

The terms "slave" and "servant" are used differently in reference to the church. The term "slave" stresses the Christian [pastor] in


\textsuperscript{43}Ibid.
subjection to the Lord. The term "servant" is concerned with his service for the church particularly. Whether done by serving tables, stressing the Word, or in some other way, a "servant" is always one who serves on Christ's behalf and continues Christ's service for the outer and inner man. Colin Brown discusses Paul as a servant:

Paul can see himself as a servant of the gospel (Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23), a servant through whom the Christians in Corinth had come to faith (1 Cor. 3:5), a servant of the new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6), a servant of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23), a servant of God (2 Cor. 6:4), a servant of the church (Col. 1:25).

The role of the servant/slave in the church can be seen best in 2 Timothy 2:24-25. "And the servant [doulos] of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach. patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." Though the term servant is a better translation than slave, the following roles can be identified. First, the servant/slave should follow the example of the Lord by being meek, lowly, and restful. Secondly, the servant/slave should not be a quarreller or one who will strive with the brethren. Thirdly, the servant/slave should be gentle. William Hendriksen describes him as "affable, easy to speak to, approachable in his demeanor: not irritable, intolerant, sarcastic, or scornful, not even toward those who err. He must try to win them. Hence, he must be gentle to all." Fourthly, the servant/slave must be "apt to teach."


45Ibid.
He should also be one who is teachable so that he can teach others with counsel and instruction. Fifth, the servant/slave must be "patient in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." The servant/slave must be capable of holding up under criticism with meekness. Hendriksen sums up the role of a servant/slave:

The apostle tells Timothy to instruct these uninstructed ones, to educate the uneducated, to discipline (in this case, with the discipline of teaching; contrast I Tim. 1:20) the undisciplined, to inform the uninformed. Instead of entering into their foolish enquiries, he must gently show them why one should not even bother with these things, and he must then immediately proceed to impart positive instruction, so that the opponents may thus receive correction.47

**Messenger**

The term "messenger" comes from the Greek word angelos, which means "messenger" or "angel." The term is used to identify human messengers, particularly an envoy or one who is sent by men or by God. Also, the term "messenger" can designate angels, or intermediary beings generally with no reference to their relation to God and evil spirits.48

The use of the term "messenger" as a human agent has only a small role in the New Testament. The main New Testament reference is to "angels" as being divine messengers and heavenly representatives. In Matthew 11:10, John the Baptist is referred to as a messenger sent by God. The term "messenger" further suggests the idea of an envoy sent by God in Luke 7:24, 27: 9:52: Mark 1:2: and James 2:25.

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function or characteristic which the leader of the local church should possess. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the material revealed that there was definitely a plurality of leadership in the New Testament church.
Prior to the Protestant Reformation the Roman Catholic Church held that the laity had to approach God through the mediation of priests [professional clergymen]. Therefore, if a Roman Catholic wanted to receive forgiveness of sin, he went to a priest, confessed the sin or sins, and received absolution. However, Martin Luther and the other reformers reaffirmed what is taught in Scripture, that every Christian is a priest. They also affirmed the fact that since all Christians are priests, then they do not need another priest to serve as a mediator between them and God.¹

The Priesthood of the Believer According to Martin Luther

The greatest contribution of Martin Luther to the Protestant Reformation was his ecclesiological doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. However, his teaching of this doctrine has been misunderstood. For some, this doctrine means that there are no priests in the church. The Quakers, for example, have argued for the abolition of the ministry as a distinct order within the church. For others, this doctrine means that the priesthood of all believers "implies that every Christian is his or her own priest and hence possesses the 'right of

private judgment' in matters of faith and doctrine."² Both of these views are inconsistent with the original intention of Martin Luther. Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of the believer can be stated in the following manner: "Every Christian is someone else's priest, and we are all priests to one another."³

According to Luther, every Christian is a priest by virtue of his baptism. The priesthood is derived directly from Christ. Thus, Luther differed with the church's traditional view that there were two classes, clergy and laity. Timothy George, quoting Luther, states:

We are priests as [H]e is Priest, sons as [H]e is Son, kings as [H]e is King. Moreover every member of the Gemeine⁴ has an equal share in this priesthood. This means that the priestly offices are the common property of all Christians, not the special prerogative of a select caste of holy men.⁵

Thus, Luther believed that there were seven rights which belong to the church: to preach the Word of God, to baptize, to celebrate Holy Communion, to bear "the keys," to pray for others, to sacrifice, and to judge doctrine. Luther based his doctrine of the priesthood of the believer on two New Testament texts, 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:6.⁶

For Luther, the priesthood of the believer was a responsibility as well as a privilege. A favorite image used by Luther was the concept

³Ibid.
⁴Ibid., 326. Luther's preferred word for the church meaning community or congregation. Also this word recalls the New Testament concept of koinonia.
⁵Ibid., 96.
⁶Ibid.
that God had made us one body, one "cake." The unity and equality of the church is found in Christ and is demonstrated by our love and care for one another. Timothy George, quoting Luther, explains, "The fact that we are all priests and kings means that each of us Christians may go before God and intercede for the other. If I notice that you have no faith or a weak faith, I can ask God to give you a strong faith."7

According to Luther, we cannot give birth to ourselves or baptize ourselves: neither can we serve God alone. Therefore, no one can be a Christian alone. Although Luther defined the church as a community of saints, Timothy George expounds upon that idea: "But who are the saints? They are not super-Christians who have been elevated to heavenly glory, on whose 'merits' we can draw for help along life's way. All who believe in Christ are saints."8 In other words, "[The church is] a community of intercessors, a priesthood of fellow helpers, a family of mutual sharers and burden-bearers."9

Furthermore, Luther expressed "his entire understanding of the church as the community of saints by describing priesthood as the law of the church's life."10 Christ did the work of a priest when He bore our burdens and interceded on our behalf with His righteousness. Thus, the priesthood of believers flows from the priesthood of Christ.11

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7George, *Theology of the Reformers*, 96.
8Ibid.
9Ibid., 97.
11Ibid., 313-314.
Likewise, believers perform a priestly function when they mutually bear the burdens of one another. According to Luther, the church is founded upon the priesthood of Christ and its structure is the priesthood of Christians for each other.

Therefore, the priesthood means that "We stand before God, pray for others, intercede with and sacrifice ourselves to God and proclaim the word to one another."\(^\text{12}\) Martin Luther did not understand in the Protestant sense, that the priesthood of all believers had "[the] freedom to stand in a direct relationship to God without a human mediator."\(^\text{13}\) However, he emphasized the believer's authority to come before God on behalf of his brethren and the world. The universal priesthood expresses the reality of the congregation as a community. According to Paul Althaus, "The individual stands directly before God, he has received the authority of substitution. The priesthood means 'the congregation' and the priesthood is the inner form of the community of saints."\(^\text{14}\)

Luther viewed the relationship between the priesthood of all believers and the office of the ministry in this way: "While all Christians have an equal share in the treasures of the church, including the sacraments, not everyone can be a preacher, teacher, or counselor. There is one common 'estate'... but a variety of offices... and functions."\(^\text{15}\) Thus, Luther regarded the ministry of the Word as the

\(^\text{12}\) Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 314.

\(^\text{13}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{14}\) Ibid., 314-315.

\(^\text{15}\) George, *Theology of the Reformers*, 97.
highest office in the church. Luther taught that every Christian was a minister and had the right to preach. According to Timothy George, Luther believed this right to preach could be exercised if one was in the midst of non-Christians, among the Turks, or stranded on a pagan island. However, Luther believed that if one was in the midst of a Christian community, he should not draw attention to himself by assuming this office on his own. George, quoting Luther, states that one should "let himself be called and chosen to preach and to teach in the place of and by the command of the others." Luther believed that the call was issued through the congregation with the minister being held accountable to that congregation. According to George, Luther went so far as to say,

What we give him today we can take away from him tomorrow. The rite of ordination confers no indelible character on the ordained. It is merely the public means by which one is commissioned through prayer, Scripture, and the laying on of hands to serve the congregation. Luther excluded women, children, and incompetent persons from the official ministry of the church; however, "in times of emergency he would have allowed these to fill this office by virtue of their share in the priesthood of all believers."  

The Role of the Priesthood of the Believer

The idea of having direct access to God also means that God is at work in approaching the believer. In other words, as each Christian seeks his/her place in specific ministry. God will make clear His call

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16George, Theology of the Reformers, 97.
17Ibid.
18Ibid.
to that specific ministry. In seeking this specific ministry, the believer has the responsibility to seek out his/her spiritual gift(s), which should be used in that individual's specific ministry.

The doctrine of the priesthood of the believer leads one to conclude that God's call to salvation is also a call to ministry. Thus, the very heart of the priesthood of the believer is salvation, which is threefold in nature. First, salvation is regeneration; it is a new birth from above. Jesus told Nicodemus, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3 NKJV). According to Herschel H. Hobbs, "In natural birth a person is born into natural relationships, privileges, and responsibilities. But in the birth from above through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are born into spiritual relationships, privileges, and responsibilities, or into the kingdom of God."19

Secondly, salvation is sanctification, which is the saving of the Christian life. At the moment of regeneration, believers are sanctified through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 14:7; Ephesians 1:13-14). Their bodies then become temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). Therefore, as sanctified believers they have been set apart for God's service.

Sanctification is directly related to the principle of the priesthood of the believer. Jesus in John 17:19 prays, "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth" (NKJV). Jesus dedicates Himself to go to the cross so that salvation

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may be available to everyone. As believers and priests of God, we are to sanctify or dedicate ourselves to the task of making Christ's redemptive work known to everyone in His name. 20

Finally, salvation is glorification, which occurs at the time of our Lord's return when the believer receives his total glory and reward in heaven, including the resurrection of his body (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14; Hebrews 9:28). Everyone who has been regenerated or born from above will be in heaven. However, the believer's reward will be determined by his sanctification. Thus, regeneration is the beginning of the believer's spiritual pilgrimage, sanctification is the continuing process, and glorification is the ultimate goal. 21

Since salvation is the heart of the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer, then it should also be the motivation to transform believers into ministers. However, Findley B. Edge suggests that we have not adequately understood that God's call to become a believer is likewise a call to ministry. He further states that God's gift and grace have been correctly emphasized, but God's call to ministry has not received adequate emphasis. In other words, many believers have accepted the gift of salvation without the commitment to become involved. 22

The New Testament is not silent on this issue. There are two passages that illustrate this dual relationship of salvation and ministry. The first is Ephesians 2:8-10. "For by grace you have been

20 Hobbs, You Are Chosen, 40.
21 Ibid., 41.
22 Edge, The Doctrine of the Laity, 28-29.
saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (NKJV). This passage emphasizes that salvation is a gift based on God's work and on man's response of faith. Although salvation is not produced by doing good works, good works are a product of the believer's salvation. God has ordained believers to do good works in His power and for His glory. Another passage that illustrates the connection between salvation and ministry is James 2:14. 20. "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? But do you want to know, O foolish man that faith without works is dead? (NKJV)." This passage, as well as the Ephesian passage, emphasizes the fact that a genuine saving faith will be marked by works.

According to Findley B. Edge, "[Authentic faith] is a commitment of one's life to God through Christ in a continuing and growing relationship. One hears and understands God's call to mission, both personal and social, and gives oneself to be an instrument to fulfill this mission in the world." The response of the believer is to have an authentic faith that involves a personal relationship with Christ, a commitment to Him, and an authentic faith that fulfills that ministry to which God has called him. Therefore, for the one who is "in Christ," spiritual growth and development for the ministry to which he has been called is not optional.

The doctrine of the priesthood of believers involves the church's

23Edge, The Doctrine of the Laity, 37.
responsibility to provide an adequate program of gift discovery for each believer. The church is responsible for affirming or not affirming an individual's call to ministry and his/her spiritual gift(s). Ministry of the laity is not to be denied but enabled. Every believer is gifted in some way for the ministry to the Body of Christ. This ministry is set apart for the purpose of equipping and enabling each other.

The priesthood of all believers leads to two conclusions. First, the call to salvation and the call to ministry are one and the same call. Secondly, the primary responsibility of God's ministry to the world rests upon the shoulders of the laity not solely upon the shoulders of the professional clergy. God has called the laity to ministry, and the ministry is their responsibility whether they desire to fulfill their ministry obligation or not. In the final analysis, the laity will be held accountable by God for the manner in which they accept or fulfill their ministry responsibility.
CHAPTER 5

CHANGES IN THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF THE PASTOR AND LAITY

This chapter provides a description of the changes in the biblical model of the pastor and laity. As part of the research for this chapter a survey instrument was adapted and administered to interested laity and professional pastors. The results of this survey will be found in Appendix 2 as well as in this chapter to substantiate arguments presented by other researchers. The survey consisted of twenty-four questions and the respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Three questions were directed to the respondents' church status (paid staff worker, volunteer worker, or church member), sex, and the number of church activities the respondent attended per month. It should be noted that four churches participated and the results were compiled as a total group and not by individual church.

As previously examined, the church is the body of Christ with many different functions. The ultimate purpose of the church is to bring glory to God. However, there exists in many churches a distinction between the laity and those who are considered as professional pastors. Leith Anderson asks, "Is this not more a function of Roman Catholic ecclesiology than biblical theology?" The Bible teaches that "all

Christians are ministers." Therefore, there exists a major discrepancy between the concept that "all Christians are ministers" and the present-day systems of education, credentialing, professionalism, and remuneration of pastors.² Darrell Robinson suggests that churches often follow one of two extremes. "They either overemphasize the clergy and minimize the laity, or minimize the clergy and overemphasize the laity."³ In order to understand this discrepancy, one must examine the historical background and the characteristics of the laity and professional pastors.

The Contemporary Professional Pastors

The senior professional pastors of 97 percent of Protestant churches are pastored by men. However, one-quarter of students in Protestant seminaries are women, with increasing numbers seeking to become senior pastors. The median age among pastors is 44, which is slightly older than the median age of all American adults, 38. Nearly all senior pastors, 96 percent, are married with about two-thirds of them having children under the age of 18. Also, seminary education is the norm for pastors, 70 percent having attended a seminary. As for the education of pastors beyond high school, 80 percent have earned a college degree, 55 percent have a master's degree, and 10 percent have received a doctoral degree. The typical pastor has been engaged in full time ministry for 14 years. However, prior to or during seminary


training he worked in secular employment.\(^4\) It also should be noted that the typical pastor receives a salary package of $32,049 including housing allowance and other benefits.\(^5\)

The most significant factor concerning professional pastors is the frequency with which they change churches. According to George Barna, the average tenure of senior pastors has dropped from seven to four years. He suggests the following reasons for this alarming trend. First, frequent pastor turnover is characteristic of ineffective leadership. Secondly, frequent changes minimize the creation of a strong relational network within the congregation. Thirdly, frequent changes remove the prospect of exploiting the influential years of ministry, which occur between the third and fifteenth years of service. Finally, frequent changes in pastors cause a church to be weak in trusting, communal, and outward orientation; therefore, a congregation will assume a protective and inward-looking perspective.\(^6\)

The laity's view of the professional pastor can be observed in the results of the survey (Appendix 2). According to the survey, 43 percent of the respondents believed that the ministry is what paid professional pastors perform; yet 100 percent of the respondents in the survey agreed that the New Testament teaches that all Christians are ministers and should be involved in the work of ministry. The survey revealed that 71 percent believed that church members do have a specific ministry within


\(^5\)Ibid., 37.

\(^6\)Ibid., 36-37.
the church. Also, 88 percent believed that it is important to train church members to perform God's work before calling additional paid professional staff members. However, 59 percent believed the paid professional pastor is responsible for doing the work of evangelism and bringing in new members of the church. Yet in this same survey, 94 percent stated that the key to church growth is trained, mobilized church members performing evangelism and discipleship ministries.

The recorded responses definitely give evidence to the fact that the laity understand the biblical mandates concerning their involvement in ministry. However, it is apparent they are confused over the role of the professional pastor and his responsibilities. It should be noted in Appendix 2, Table 25 that 37 percent of those surveyed agreed that the spiritual gifts and the New Testament officers including bishop, pastor, elder, deacon, evangelist, apostle, etc., are the same.

The respondents of the survey believed that those involved in full-time paid professional ministry should not receive special status and privileges in the church. Also, 74 percent of the respondents believed that the New Testament makes no distinction between paid pastoral staff and non-paid church members. The survey reflects that 70 percent of the respondents think that the distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members became evident in the church centuries after the New Testament was written. The survey revealed that 89 percent of the paid professional pastors do not feel threatened when church members become involved in ministry. Furthermore, 70 percent believed that church members should be permitted to preach, counsel, and minister to the sick, dying and bereaved. However, when asked if church
members should be allowed to perform any ministry of paid professional pastors if they had proper training. only 64 percent agreed or strongly agreed. The survey revealed that 64 percent believed that the distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members is the result of power politics rather than a result of biblical/theological conviction.

The survey found that 98 percent of the respondents believed that paid professional pastors would prefer church members to be involved in ministry. Also, 94 percent believed that paid professional pastors are willing to take the time to train their church members to do ministry. The survey further revealed that 93 percent believed that paid professional pastors think that church members are competent to do ministry and would not do any harm to the church. According to the survey, 95 percent of the respondents believed that it was important for the church to train church members for ministry. It was also apparent from the survey that 86 percent of the respondents want creative and challenging roles in their church involvement.

The Contemporary Laity

From his research, George Barna is able to describe the makeup of a typical congregation in today's church. According to Barna, the pastor who stands behind the pulpit on Sunday morning will likely see a congregation that is considerably older than the community at large. "For the most part, young adults are conspicuous by their absence. Although 24 percent of the nation's population is 50 or older, about 51 percent of the adults who attend church on a given weekend are from that
age group. Married women comprise at least two-thirds of the congregation; however, single mothers are least likely to attend, feeling that the church is neither accepting nor supportive of them. Barna also suggests that the congregation will be ethnically homogeneous; however, a few people of different color or background may be mixed with the congregation.

George Barna also states that two-thirds of the congregation can be counted on to attend church rather regularly, three to four weekends a month. The other one-third of church attendees change from week to week. The survey (Appendix 2, Table 1) conducted for this Doctor of Ministry project asked the respondents about their church activity per month. Most of them, 66 percent, listed their church activity from 3 to 8 times per month; 14 percent of the respondents listed their church activity from 0-2; and 20 percent from 9 to more than 12 per month.

Also Barna suggests that in the typical community only four of ten adults attend church service during the weekend. He also states that the total number of church attenders is diminishing; and when numerical growth does occur, it is because church adults have left one congregation for another congregation. According to Barna the average pastor's attention is focused more on survival than on controlling explosive church growth. It is unlikely that unchurched adults will decide to change their pattern of behavior by returning to a place of

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7 Barna, Today's Pastors, 43.
8 Ibid., 44-45.
9 Ibid., 45.
Recent research confirms the concerns of pastors that volunteerism within the church is declining. Although donations are up, the increase in giving has not kept pace with the cost of living. Yet the demand upon the church is to provide more services to a fragmented population with fewer people who are serving as leaders within that particular church body. In reality the church is facing a decline among the laity in volunteering their services and a financial base that does not surpass the cost of ministry. Barna explains the problem in terms of the laity's attitude.

The irony of the situation is that when the pastor pleads with people to sacrifice some of their resources to facilitate a broader ministry, the typical response is based on how a person views the request as fulfilling the needs of society. On the one hand, the minister is unable to marshal the required funds or volunteer assistance to support needed ministries because the people see no evidence of the church having produced true impact. On the other hand, he cannot produce such evidence until people give their time and money.

Barna identifies the following characteristics of the laity. First, he cites that only one-third of church adults make an effort to share their religious faith with others. Secondly, he notes that the congregation for the most part is biblically illiterate. Bible-based preaching, Bible-based teaching, or small group meetings do not move a person to a higher plane of Bible knowledge. Barna states, "Lay members are abysmally ignorant of the basics of the Bible. Most cannot

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10 Barna, Today's Pastors, 46.
11 Ibid., 47.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 48.
name half of the Ten Commandments. Most people do not know that it was Jesus Christ who preached the Sermon on the Mount. Ask about the book of Thomas, and nearly half of all adults will be unaware that such a book is not in the Bible."14 This lack of biblical knowledge is apparent from the survey in which 60 percent of the respondents (Appendix 2. Table 23) either agreed or strongly agreed that a spiritual gift and a talent (special ability) are the same. Also, in the same survey (Appendix 2. Table 24) 61 percent either agreed or strongly agreed that the spiritual gifts and the fruits of the spirit are the same.

The Historical Development of the Distinctions

The first century church or Apostolic church, founded at Pentecost and continuing into the second and third centuries, was a church with vitality and life. The gospel at this time penetrated the known world with multitudes of churches being established with a New Testament pattern of church life.

Nevertheless, by the latter part of the third century, a trend had developed which elevated the position of bishop beyond the New Testament role of servant/leader. At this same time the Roman emperor Constantine embraced Christianity, making it the official state religion of the Roman Empire. This development gave rise to the appointment of specific bishops to prominent positions within the government of the state; thus, the church joined hands with the state.

By the fifth century AD the bishop of Rome had gained sovereignty

14Barna. Today’s Pastors. 48-49.
within the state. This rise to power led to the emergence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and papal system. Gradually the Roman Catholic hierarchy developed a strong distrust of the laity. The clergy were given the responsibility of doing the spiritual work of the ministry. At this same time the Roman Catholic hierarchy took the Bible out of the hands of the people, for it was believed that only the clergy could understand it. The distrust and removal of the Scriptures from the laity and the elevation of the clergy resulted in a spiritual decline during the Middle Ages and led to a multitude of heresies. 15

By the time of the Middle Ages, which was also a time of spiritual darkness, there was a remnant of true believers who followed the New Testament pattern. Those believers, such as the Petrobrusians and Waldensians, faced suppression and persecution, at times being forced underground because of their beliefs. At the close of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance began within the universities. This new movement was known as a "revival of learning." 16

The revival of learning brought about a desire of those who were not in the clergy to study the Scriptures. This interest in the Bible intensified by the middle of the fifteenth century with Gutenberg’s development of moveable type. In fact, the first book to be printed by moveable type was the Bible. When the lay people began studying the Scriptures their spiritual restlessness led to the Protestant Reformation, which developed as people revolted against the Roman Catholic Church.

15 Robinson. Total Church Life. 125.

16 Ibid., 126.
The Protestant Reformation brought about a climate of greater religious freedom, the acceptance of the absolute authority of the Scriptures, the belief in salvation by grace through faith, and the practice of the priesthood of every believer. It was during the Reformation that the distinctions between clergy and laity were removed within the protestant churches. The protestant clergy were God-called pastors who emerged from the laity.17

The Reformers taught the parity of ministers in place of a graded hierarchy. The graded hierarchy consisted of a special priesthood who offered the very body and blood of Christ. However, the Reformers taught of a general priesthood of believers who offered the sacrifices of prayer and praise for the one sacrifice offered [Jesus Christ] for all time to come. Martin Luther "derived the lay-priesthood from baptism as an anointing by the Holy Spirit and an incorporation into Christ."18

However, Luther maintained the necessity of a ministry as a matter of order and expediency. He also asserted the divine origin of ministry when he taught: "Every public teacher [minister] must be called of God through the Church, or prove his extraordinary call by miracles."19 Thus, the Augsburg Confession declares "That no man shall publicly teach in the church, or administer the sacraments, without a regular call."20

17 Robinson, Total Church Life, 126.


19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.
The Reformer John Calvin maintained five principles of church polity which have exerted great influence in the development of Protestantism: first, the autonomy of the Church, or its right of self-government under the sole headship of Jesus Christ; second, the parity of the clergy as distinct from a *jure divino* hierarchy whether papal or prelatical; third, the participation of the Christian laity in Church government and discipline; fourth, strict discipline to be exercised jointly by minister and lay-elders, with the consent of the whole congregation; and finally, the union of Church and State on a theocratic basis, if possible, or separation, if necessary, to secure the purity and self-government of the Church.21

However, the Reformers of the Protestant Reformation did not make a complete break from the graded hierarchy of ministry. The Reformation did mark a radical shift from the church as the dispenser of grace to the proclamation of the gospel as the means of salvation. The doctrine of justification by faith made a marked effect on the view and practice of ministry. Being justified by faith is not mediated through the Church but directly through Jesus Christ. As Greg Ogden states, "Neither pastors, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, nor the pope can represent an individual before God: Jesus Christ alone has that function. A hierarchical conception of ministry is, therefore, undermined by the gospel."22 Thus, the sacerdotal function of the


priest was eliminated by the Reformers' understanding of the gospel.

Yet the Reformation never fully realized the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. The Reformers gave the minister or the pastor of the church the responsibility to preserve the church's doctrine and the proper ordering of church life. Therefore, ministry was equated with ordination "to the ministry of Word and sacraments." Thus, the church is defined by a select group of leaders who have the role of carrying out the essence of the church. In other words, the church became empowered by a top-down leadership, a priesthood within a priesthood.23

In his book, *The Democratization of American Christianity* Nathan O. Hatch presents an assessment of religion and culture in the early days of the American republic. He suggests that during this period American Christianity was democratized and the common people [the laity] became the dominant players within the church. He states that "the democratization of Christianity . . . has less to do with the specifics of polity and governance and more with the incarnation of the church into popular culture."24 He explains that there are at least three reasons why the popular religious movements [the Christian movement, the Methodists, the Baptists, the black churches, and the Mormons] of the early American republic articulated a democratic spirit. First, "they denied the age-old distinction that set the clergy apart as a separate order of men. and they refused to defer to learned theologians and

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traditional orthodoxies." Second, these movements empowered the ordinary people [laity] to regard their spiritual impulses at face value instead of subjecting them to the scrutiny of orthodox doctrine and clergy. Finally, religious outsiders dreamed that a new age of religious and social harmony would spring up and that it would overthrow coercive and authoritarian structures.26

As an example, Hatch says that Francis Asbury used authoritarian means to build a church that would not be a respecter of persons. "This church faced the curious paradox of gaining phenomenal influence among laypersons with whom it would not share ecclesiastical authority."27 However, Timothy Dwight, the president of Yale, links the fate of Christianity to the reputation of its ministers. He assumes that ministers were to be a separate order of men who were capable of elevating "mankind at large" by their respectability, seriousness, intelligence, and piety.28

Hatch asserts that it was within this climate that some began to reexamine the social function of the clergy and to question the right of any order of men to claim authority to interpret God's Word. "If opinions about politics and society were no longer the monopoly of the few, why could not people begin to think for themselves in matters of religion?"29 According to Hatch,

25Hatch. The Democratization of American Christianity. 9.
26Ibid. 9-11.
27Ibid. 11.
28Ibid. 19.
29Ibid. 24.
More than lawyers or physicians, American clergy have remained subject to democratic forces. In the first third of the nineteenth century, a stiff democratic challenge shattered the professional monopoly of educated elite over law, medicine, and the church. State laws permitted almost anyone to practice law, and various brands of medical practice were allowed to compete for the public's attention. Yet in the twentieth century, doctors and lawyers have reasserted their professional prerogatives. The American Medical Association and the American Bar Association now serve as powerful monopolies. A free-market economy continues in the field of religion, however, and credentialing, licensing, or statutory control is absent. This hands-off position is sacrosanct because of fixed notions about the separation of church and state and because of the long-standing voluntary principle within the churches.  

Christianity continued to spread during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with a great emphasis on world missions. However, the distinction between clergy and laity as well as the distrust between them still exists today. Darrell W. Robinson suggests five factors which contribute to this distinction. First, Robinson identifies the trend of uninvolved church members who come, sit, and give money to pay someone else to perform the work of ministry and witness. Secondly, he identifies the fact that preachers attempt to do all the church's work of witnessing, soul-winning, counseling, and other "spiritual" ministries. Thirdly, he cites the concept of the unrealistic expectation of churches towards their pastors, such as expecting the pastor to produce church growth. Fourthly, he cites the tendency to resort to "gimmick" approaches to gaining instant members and finances rather than equipping members to minister. Lastly, he identifies concepts of organizing and operating new churches, often resulting in groups of people deciding to organize a new church by pooling their money, hiring a minister, and expecting him to do their ministering for

\[30\]Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, 16.
An Examination of the Reasons for the Distinctions

As previously examined the clergy, for the most part, have low expectations of the laity. Laity are set apart by being called laymen or members of the laity. The term "layman" is a reminder that church members are not ministers because they have not received ordination. Also, the professional clergy may feel suspicious or threatened and hostile by the organization of a group of untrained professionals because of some of the popular expressions of the laity and the low level of beliefs and practices.

Also as previously examined the laity, for the most part, have high expectations of the professional clergy. The laity sees the trained professional as the one who has received a personal call from God for the work of ministry. The laity views the professional clergy as performing their jobs and receiving financial renumeration for the ministries which they provide. Furthermore, the laity regard the professional clergy as having a monopoly over the work in which they have specialized; therefore, the laity are hesitant to trespass in the area of the professional minister.

Darrell Robinson in his book Total Church Life suggests that these distinctions between clergy and laity exist because the laity have always been willing to concede their spiritual responsibility to the pastor, while the clergy have always been willing to accept the

31 Robinson. Total Church Life. 126-127.
spiritual responsibility for the laity. Robinson further suggests that there are reasons for such behavior by the laity. First, the laity are for the most part spiritually immature because of their lack of knowledge of the Word of God. They fail to understand that at salvation they too became a part of God's ministering people. Secondly, the laity are absorbed with the things of the world: they are totally consumed with the need of making a living and involvement in worldly matters. Finally, the laity view Christianity as a religion and not as a relationship with the living God through Jesus Christ.

David F. Wells points to three outside influences upon the church today which are definitely affecting the laity and clergy. First, evangelicalism as a whole reverberates with worldliness, which he defines as "that set of practices in a society, its values and ways of looking at life, that make sin look normal and righteousness look strange. It is the view of the world that puts the sinner at its center and relegates God to the periphery." The influence of worldliness is also connected to idolatry. According to Wells, idolatry is trusting a substitute for God to serve a divine function. The popular idols of our time are money, power, expertise, the location of the planets on the astrological charts, and a belief in progress. Another influence is the inability of the church to see how "entrepreneurship or

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32 Robinson, Total Church Life, 127-128.
33 Ibid., 128.
35 Ibid., 52.
organizational wizardry or public relations or television images and glossy magazines per se" carry within them values that are hostile to the Christian faith. Wells states that "what is plainly missing...is discernment, and this has much to do with the dislocation of biblical truth from the life of the church today and much to do with the dying of its theological soul."36 Finally, there is the consumer mentality of the church which is the heart of twentieth-century Western experience. Wells suggests that we are "consumers of things, words, images, sex, power, relationships, experiences, and ethnicity. We are all suspended in a state of unsatisfied desire, perpetually expecting that immediate satisfaction is at hand, trying to work out the key to obtaining it."37

In his book, *Today’s Pastors*, George Barna gives his view of the gap between the clergy and the laity. He says that people make their views of the pastor known in a variety of ways. They sometimes verbalize their views in expectations or reviews of the pastor’s performance. Secondly, they communicate through their response to calls for help or involvement in ministry. Thirdly, people give evidence of their feelings for the man who responds to their pressing problems. Barna cites that only three of ten adults would seek help from a minister during a time of crisis. Finally, lay people doubt that the church [pastor] is sensitive to their needs and often wonder if they will receive the practical advice regarding the difficulties that they


37 Ibid., 61.
face day to day.38

Barna further suggests that the pastor is under enormous pressure from the laity. In fact, the privilege of leading God's people is like having a noose around the pastor's neck, but it is by God's grace that the slack has not been tightened. Barna states that the pastor knows what is expected of him:

Live an exemplary life; be available at all times to all people for all purposes; lead the church to grow numerically; balance wisdom with leadership and love; teach people the deeper truths of the faith in ways that are readily applicable in all life situations; be a committed family man who demonstrates what it means to be the spiritual head of the family, a lover of one woman and a positive role model for children; keep pace with the latest trends and developments in church life; build significant relationships with members of the congregation; represent the church in the community; grow spiritually; run the church in a crisp, professional, business-like manner without taking on a cold, calculating air.39

There are numerous reasons why the clergy have reverted to these distinctions. First, the clergy are ignorant of the Word of God particularly of New Testament ministry patterns and concepts for pastor and laity. as can be seen in the fact that ministers are frequently not willing to equip the saints for the work of ministry. Then the ego and pride of the professional clergy allow them to enjoy "pedestal position" and "the super saint who can do it all" mentality. There is also the pressure experienced by the professional clergy in achieving the high expectations of the people. Yet another reason is that the equipping of the laity for the work of ministry is difficult and time consuming. Most professional clergymen see it as being easier to do the ministry themselves than to find, enlist, and equip someone else to do it.

38Barna, Today's Pastors. 49.
39Ibid., 52.
Finally, professional clergy may be shortsighted, particularly if they have high ambitions of achieving numerical results. Equipping the laity may not bring immediate success; the effectiveness of an equipping ministry should be measured over a long period of time.⁴⁰

According to Robinson, the distinctions between clergy and laity bring ruin into God's church. God's plan, the divine plan, is substituted for a human plan. The ministry of the church is limited to a paid professional or a paid professional staff while the laity is dormant to ministry. The professional clergy is limited because of his work load. He has too much to do and no help. The church does not grow to spiritual maturity; therefore, the church is defeated. Spiritual maturity comes as members are involved in ministry. The unreached go unconverted because the professional clergy is totally involved in ministry to the reached, while the reached are uninvolved in ministry.⁴¹

### Professional Pastor/Laity Dichotomy or Style of Leadership

It is apparent that there are many reasons for the professional pastor/laity dichotomy. However, Kennon L. Callahan in his book, *Effective Church Leadership*, presents a different perspective for this dichotomy. According to Callahan, the professional ministry was born in the churched culture of the 1940s and ceased to be functional in the 1980s. Callahan has observed that during the years following World War II, there emerged within the United States a cultural movement of professionalism. Prior to World War II, the primary focus was on

⁴⁰Robinson, *Total Church Life*, 128-129.
⁴¹Ibid., 129.
vocation or calling: following World War II, the primary focus was on profession. Callahan gives the following example:

Prior to World War II, doctors thought of themselves as doctors, lawyers thought of themselves as lawyers, and ministers thought of themselves as ministers. Following World War II, doctors began to think of themselves as professionals, lawyers began to think of themselves as professionals, and ministers began to think of themselves as professionals. The focus shifted from vocation to profession, from calling to professionalism.

Therefore, Callahan concludes, "the 'professional minister movement' was a reflection, in religious circles, of the cultural movement toward professionalism in the wider society of that time."

Callahan suggests that the professional minister movement arose as an answer to those who felt that all one needed to be a minister was a "dose of sincerity, a dash of commitment, a little bit of good will, and a calling from God." The professional minister movement decreed that a "person needed training, education, professional qualifications, and even continuing education in order to be a professional minister." It should be noted that the professional minister movement did not overlook the need for a calling to ministry, but the primary contribution of the movement has been to advance professionalism.

Callahan further suggests that following World War II, there existed a churched culture. People held a view that the church was


43 Ibid., 4.

44 Ibid., 5.


46 Ibid.
important in their lives. Also at this time, people believed that participation in church helped them to live good lives. Therefore, people sought the church out and initiated their own involvement. Callahan defined a churched culture as being marked "by the presence of a persistent, pervasive, major feeling among the people that the church is important."47

Within that churched culture administration became a significant part of the work of a minister, and church ministry was established according to this plan: First, the minister serves inside the church. Secondly, the laity ministers in the world. Thirdly, the world is seeking out the church. This idea worked as long as the world was seeking out the church.48 However, the world is no longer seeking out the church: thus, we no longer live in a churched culture. Callahan states.

Yet it is precisely because so many churches continue to believe and act as though this were a churched culture that we have as many stable and declining and dying churches as we do. The understanding of leadership and the behavior patterns that were helpful in the churched culture of the 1950s are not well adapted for the unchurched culture of the 1980s and 1990s.49

Callahan suggests three major reasons why churches continue with the outdated style of leadership. First is selective perception; that is, people look for a friendly church. Therefore, the reason people are not in a given church is that they do not perceive that church to be friendly. According to Callahan, pastors develop selective perception

47Callahan. Effective Church Leadership. 8.
48Ibid., 9-10.
49Ibid., 14.
as well. Pastors who attempt to do effective shepherding by visiting their members frequently reach the point that their selective perception does not "see" the "other people, the other homes in their community." 50 Secondly, this leadership continues because it is familiar and habitual. Professional pastors have been trained to focus their work primarily inside the church. Thirdly, this leadership continues because it is peaceful and secure. The professional pastor finds it to be more peaceful and secure to stay in the office than to venture out into the world. 51 Thus, "people lead in direct relation to the way they experience being led. When the minister's focus is inside the church, that creates laity whose focus remains inside as well." 52

To conclude, Callahan states that Martin Luther used the category of priest, which was the dominant theological term in his time, to declare that there is no gap, no chasm, no gulf between professional ministers. Callahan points to Martin Luther's statement that "We are together God's people. We are together priests." 53 However, Callahan argues that the past forty years have seen the widening separation between professional ministers and the laity. In other words, the professional minister has highlighted the pomp and circumstance of his role and, in the final analysis, has created his own caste system. This caste system is evident by the different perks such as special titles, reserved parking spaces, etc., that professional ministers have assumed

50 Callahan, Effective Church Leadership, 14.
51 Ibid., 15-16.
52 Ibid., 20.
53 Ibid., 33.
to belong to them exclusively. The fact that the professional pastor or the ordained minister has a "higher calling" is evident in the average worship service. If the laity are not involved in the regular leadership of worship in a local church, it is because the service is being offered by those who have received the training or the "calling."

A description of the changes in the biblical model of the pastor and laity was presented in this chapter. It was noted that the professional pastor frequently changes churches usually serving only four years. The short term pastorate was noted to be due in part to ineffective leadership, lack of a strong relational network with the congregation, or due to the lack of positive influences fostered by a long term pastorate. Also, research revealed that the majority of the laity will not share their faith and are biblically illiterate.

This chapter revealed that the latter part of the third century saw the development of clergy and laity distinctions. The Reformation ended the distinctions between the clergy and laity. However, the Reformers did not make a complete break from the graded hierarchy of ministry. This hierarchy has been enhanced further by a cultural movement from volunteerism to professionalism. Thus, the distinctions between clergy and laity has continued to be a problem even to this present time.
CHAPTER 6
THE BASICS OF A LAY EQUIPPING MINISTRY PROGRAM

The purpose of this chapter will be to outline the basics of a lay equipping ministry program. The primary goal of the church should be the equipping of its members for the purpose of ministry. Equipping is simply the process of training people to participate in the ministry for Christ. The word "equipping" is used in Ephesians 4:12 (NKJV). It is the translation of the Greek word *katartismos*, which means "a making fit" or "perfecting." implying a process leading to consummation. It can also mean "a fitting or preparing fully."¹ Thus, equipping is a means of enabling believers to become productive disciples who live out the Great Commission. Believers should be equipped to penetrate their sphere of influence in their own generation. The result of an equipping ministry will be realized in the lives of believers, in the scope of ministry, and in the impact on any generation in any community.²

The Basic Tools of an Equipping Ministry

According to John MacArthur, God has given four basic tools for the spiritual equipping of the saints. The first tool of equipping the


saints is the Bible, the Word of God. The pastor is to feed himself, feed his people, and lead the people to feed themselves on the Word of God. The second tool of equipping the saints is prayer. The pastor is responsible for preparing himself and his people and then leading them in prayer. The third tool of equipping the saints is testing, a process of refining all believers to greater holiness. It is through testing that we learn to respond to God in trust and obedience at the same time that our spiritual muscles are strengthened. As spiritual muscles are strengthened, they broaden the believers' horizons for effective service to Him. The fourth tool used in equipping the saints is suffering. As testing strengthens the spiritual muscles of the believer, likewise suffering strengthens the muscles.3

The Place Of Spiritual Gifts

If the believer has been called to salvation and ministry, then what role do spiritual gifts play in the life of the believer?4 The key passage is Ephesians 4:1-16, which speaks of the unity of the church: One faith. one Lord. and one baptism. However. a contrasting theme is found in verse 7. "But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift" (NKJV). It is apparent that Paul is not referring to the grace by which believers are saved but to the grace God gives believers for the purpose of ministry. The believer has been saved by grace, yet God continues to give grace for the believer's

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4A thorough discussion concerning spiritual gifts can be found in Appendix 3 of this Doctor of Ministry Project.
ministry. According to Howard A. Snyder, "The principle and power by which you were saved is the principle and power by which you serve. The church operates by grace (charis) through the gifts of the Spirit (charismata)." Thus, the church is saved by grace and serves by grace.

Believers are one in Christ; and all are part of the Body of Christ, the church. God shares His grace with us from the fullness of Christ, which is not exhausted by the new birth of the believer. The fullness of Christ also includes an abundance of grace for spiritual gifts. Therefore, the church is made up of believers and conducts its work through the exercise of the full range of spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:15-16). However, as Snyder states,

No Christian can grow into the fullness of Christ except as he or she is part of a growing, maturing body. It is the whole believing community, not the individual believer, who reaches Christ's fullness, and the individual believer reaches that fullness only in the environment of a maturing community of believers.

The believer should discover God's particular manifestation of grace in his or her life for ministry. As spiritual gifts are recognized, discovered, and exercised, each part does its work in the body. The church thereby grows in unity at the same time building itself in love. In other words spiritual gifts are basic to the healthy spiritual life of the church as well as its redemptive ministry in the world.

It should be noted that no one believer has all the gifts. However, most believers will have at least one or maybe more gifts.

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Ibid.
Also, the Holy Spirit is the gift-giver, and He determines the distribution of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11). The believer is dependent upon the Holy Spirit since all spiritual gifts will emerge through the work of the Holy Spirit. The believers in the body of Christ are to work together in order to accomplish His will. The church will grow according to the fullness of Christ as all the spiritual gifts work and mutually support each other.

It should be noted that more is involved than the believer's exercising his or her spiritual gifts. The spiritual growth of the believer also involves sanctification and discipleship. The gifts of the Spirit are not divorced from the fruit of the Spirit, and the more dramatic gifts have been emphasized over sanctification and the building of Christian character. Likewise, there has been an emphasis upon the belief that spiritual gifts were for the early church and not for today. Instead, love and sanctification are more important today. However, it is apparent from Scripture that both sanctification and spiritual gifts belong together to assist the body of Christ to grow in Christlikeness and to increase in maturity.

Howard Snyder points out that today's churches often do not fully utilize spiritual gifts. "The church quenches the Spirit when it fails to make enough space for the exercise of the gifts God gives." Snyder further explains, "The contemporary church does not believe profoundly in the biblical doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit." The teaching of the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4) is that

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7Snyder, Liberating the Church, 174.

8Ibid., 175.
the Holy Spirit gives various, specific, and useful gifts to the church. However, contemporary churches for the most part attach no importance to these passages. This phenomenon can be observed when one considers the impression he receives when comparing these passages to the present day corporate-style churches, organizations, and denominations. Snyder cites the following examples:

The Spirit-led church chooses its leaders according to each member's gifts. The institutionalized church chooses leaders according to how many positions it takes to run the organization.

The Spirit-led church chooses those who are spiritually most mature and qualified. The institutionalized church chooses some of questionable spirituality in the hope that more responsibility will help them grow spiritually.

The Spirit-led church involves all to the limit of their capacity and according to their gifts. The institutionalized church piles responsibilities on the few with special gifts for organization or promotion and considers others as incapable of significant service.

The Spirit-led church enlists all who can make a contribution to the Kingdom, while the institutionalized church enlists only those who can maintain or extend the church's institutional life. And so, whatever its dynamism, it is not free for the Kingdom.

In the church for the Kingdom, the motto is not maintenance but mission, not survival but service. In the institutionalized church, the Kingdom dynamic has been domesticated, and the saints have lost the ability to see a difference between Kingdom service and organizational self-preservation.

Thus, Snyder suggests that the institutionalized church quenches the Spirit in several ways. The terms "service" and "ministry" are defined in organizational terms. The terms "clergy" and "laity" split the body of Christ. The institutionalized church is a building-centered program and measures success from an institutional rather than a

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9Snyder. Liberating the Church. 174.

10Ibid. 175-176.
spiritual perspective. The evangelism-social-action split blinds believers to many crucial Kingdom ministries or calls those specific ministries into question. Finally, the institutionalized church is insensitive to the fundamentals of the church.

Also, Snyder states that the gifts of the Spirit have three important aspects. First, all ministry is by God’s grace. Training, intelligence, experience, education, and ordination have their place; but they are secondary to God’s ministering through believers by His own grace. Second, God gives a wide variety of ministries which are all important for the Kingdom. This fact is apparent in the early church, where spiritual gifts were used in a variety of ministries. Lastly, every believer has some ministry. Furthermore, every believer has at least one spiritual gift which is to be put to work for the Kingdom. Every believer is created in the image of God, every believer has a gift, and God gives every believer a gift or gifts for the purpose of performing significant eternal ministry. Therefore, every believer has intrinsic value. When spiritual gifts fail to operate, then to that degree the Kingdom of God is diminished and the ministry of the church is hampered.  

It should be noted that there exists a definite link between the priesthood of the believer and the gifts of the Spirit. In fact, they clarify and reinforce each other. According to Snyder, they both point to the same truth: "Ministry is for all believers. All are priests; all are gifted." Although the priesthood of the believer tells the

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11 Snyder, Liberating the Church. 176-177.

12 Ibid., 178.
believer that he or she has a ministry. It does not tell us that the believers' ministries vary. Spiritual gifts do help the believers to make distinctions among the various places of ministries, and believers are able to carry out their various ministries differently because of the gifts they have received from God. Thus, the development of an equipping ministry in a local church begins with discovering one's spiritual gift(s).

The Pastor as Equipper

It is apparent that the work of Christ was not given to the few or to the qualified. The work of Christ has been given to all of the body of Christ. However, within the body of Christ specific functions and tasks have been given to the pastor\textsuperscript{13} which are designed to enable the body to accomplish its mission (Ephesians 4:11-12). The pastor has a ministry of equipping and enabling the body to fulfill its mission. However, the pastor cannot assume the total ministry of the body, which belongs to the whole church.\textsuperscript{14} The key to enabling and equipping the body for ministry is the pastor. If the pastor is free to share the ministry, the total ministry of the church will be unleashed to accomplish its mission.\textsuperscript{15}

Bruce Grubbs suggests that there should be a distinction between

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{13}In this section the word "pastor" will be used as the one who is totally responsible for equipping the local body of Christ. It should be noted that in larger churches more than one pastor can be responsible for the equipping of the body.
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ministry as the work of the church and the functions of equipping and enabling. The term "pastoral ministry" should be used for the functions of equipping and enabling. Pastoral ministry, which is implemented by the pastor, refers to guiding, protecting, feeding, and nourishing the church for the purposes of growth, development, and reproduction of itself in the world. Grubbs states that pastoral ministry "may be seen as what Jesus did with the first body of believers, equipping, encouraging, and enabling them to fulfill His mission."  

In addition, the term "pastoral ministry" makes the distinction in the broader ministry of the church for which all believers have a responsibility. All believers are ministers and servants by the virtue of their priesthood; however, not all are pastoral ministers, who have been charged by God and confirmed by the church to equip, enable, and lead the church in its mission. Thus, the church as the body of Christ on earth asserts its role by recognizing and affirming the call of the pastoral minister. It should be noted that this recognition and affirmation is referred to as ordination, although it does not bestow spiritual power or rank upon those who receive it. At the same time, ordination provides protection to the church from those who wrongfully proclaim themselves to be called and gifted.  

Grubbs suggests that there are four primary tasks which pastoral ministers perform: first, leading the church in accomplishing and fulfilling its work; second, proclaiming the gospel to both believers


\[17\] Ibid., 23.
and unbelievers; third, caring for believers and unbelievers within the
community of the body; and lastly, interpreting and undergirding the
work and mission of the church; and if the church is affiliated with a
denomination, its work and mission. 18

Thus, pastoral ministers are gifted and called by God and
confirmed and assigned to their work by the church. According to
Grubbs, there are three primary areas of accountability. First, the
pastoral minister must adhere to the highest personal values, behavior
and attitudes. The pastoral minister, like all believers, is
responsible for his personal life and witness. Second, the pastoral
minister is accountable for his work both to the Lord and the church.
Third, the pastoral minister is accountable for his relationships,
including those expressed by friendship with others in and out of the
church. 19 The body of Christ needs to be built upon successful
relationships, the vertical relationship between the believer and the
Lord as well as the horizontal relationships among believers. 20

Robert Slocum, a layman, proposes two models for lay leadership in
the church, the "e-Leader" and the "E-Leader." The e-Leader is
patterned after the first century elder, who was involved in one-on-one
ministry, discipling family, friends, co-workers, and fellow Christians
both inside and outside of the church. The E-Leader has the
responsibility of the congregation's institutional life. Slocum

18Stacker and Grubbs, Shared Ministry: A Journey Toward
Togetherness in Ministry, 20.

19Ibid., 26-28.

20Tillapaugh, Unleashing the Church, 78.
patterned this leader after that of the lay elders in John Calvin's church in Geneva. These elders were men chosen by the church and approved by the city council of Geneva for the purpose of overseeing the church, schools, and seminary under Calvin's domain. Slocum assigns five steps to the E-Leader that must take place in order to prepare a church's congregation for effective ministry. However, these same five steps could be assigned to the pastor(s) and/or other leaders of a church as part of their roles in equipping the laity.

The first step would be to focus the congregation's attention on the need for ministry of the laity. As Slocum suggests, both the professional clergy and laity need to be reminded that all the members of the body of Christ are ministers and that spiritual gifts have been distributed to every believing member of the church. The key to ministry in the church is lay men and women ministering to one another.

The second step would be to assign tasks within the church. This step does not consist of assigning members to certain tasks for the purpose of filling empty slots for ministry. However, it does mean assigning tasks to individuals whose spiritual gifts fit the tasks and making sure that individuals feel comfortable in fulfilling particular tasks. In other words, each person should believe that this is the ministry the Lord has called him/her to fulfill. Also, this second step would include being an encourager to those who are involved in ministry.

The third step would be to insist upon excellence in the total ministry of the church. However, this is not to say that excellence

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should be based upon corporate or managerial standards but upon biblical standards. Biblical standards would be the highest levels of faithfulness, obedience, and love. It also means that members of the body hold each other accountable to God for each other's actions.

The fourth step would be to call the church to strategic planning. The process of strategic planning could be accomplished by asking three questions: "What business are we in?:" "What business should we be in as a church?:" and "How?" Strategic planning would enable the church to convert to new directions of ministry with goals and objectives.

The final step would be to call the church to renewal. This call is a renewal of the covenant relationship that God has with His people (Jeremiah 24:6-7). When God's people are called to renewal, the following process is set in motion. God redeems His people from that which is holding them captive. The people then must repent; that is, they must turn loose of whatever they are holding higher than God. Following repentance, God restores the people. Thus, the call of the church to renewal flows from redemption, to repentance, and then to restoration. Renewal will increase the effectiveness of the church's ministry both to those within and to those outside of the body.²²

If leadership is spread throughout the congregation, what then is the role of the designated leader, the pastor? According to A. Duane Litfin, the pastor should be viewed as the "completer." This concept was originally developed by William C. Schutz, a social psychologist. This view of leadership comes from a branch of psychoanalytic theory called "ego psychology." Litfin describes Schutz's theory in the

²²Slocum, Maximize Your Ministry, 256-266.
The functions of leadership in a group are essentially the same as the functions of the ego in the individual personality. In other words, "an individual is assumed to have a group within him" which functions in the same way as a group made up of several individuals. Thus what is known about individual personalities will also be true in a corresponding way of a group. Specifically the ego of the personality will function like the leader of the group, and vice versa.

Litfin states that there are aspects of Schutz's theory of leadership that resemble the role of the pastor. The task of the leader is to complete what is lacking in the group. At times the role of the leader may be unpleasant because the leader has to place the welfare of the group above his own.

According to Litfin, there are parallels between Schutz's concept and the role of the pastor. The primary role of the pastor is to "equip the saints" for the work of ministry, not in the final analysis to do the work of the ministry himself. Litfin suggests that there are five pastoral parallels. First, the pastor must understand the leadership requirement of the local church, both task and maintenance behaviors. Task behaviors are defined as those behaviors which help the group to reach its specified goals. Maintenance behaviors are defined as those behaviors which enhance the group's interpersonal relationships in a manner that enables the group to function as an effective unit. Second, the pastor must diagnose which leadership requirements are present and which are missing in his congregation. Third, the pastor must be able and willing to help the members of his congregation perform and fulfill

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24Ibid.
the leadership behaviors which they may lack. Fourth, the pastor himself must be willing, if others are not properly equipped, to fulfill the needed leadership behaviors as a means of completing what is lacking in the congregation. Finally, the pastor, even though he may be involved in things that are personally displeasing, must be willing to work with selfless devotion for the welfare of the group.25

The primary role of the pastor is to facilitate the ministry to others in the congregation. At the outset of his ministry, the pastor may have to do everything; however, the primary thrust should be to involve every member in ministry. It appears then that the pastor’s main objective is to work himself out of a job.

Litfin suggests four practical implications of the pastor’s role. First, a pastor should not have to do a task which could be shared by others in the congregation. Second, if a pastor finds that after an extended period of ministry he is still supplying all of the leadership in the congregation, then his ministry may be failing to succeed in its primary goal. Third, the pastor’s assuming the role of completer enables him to involve others in the ministry while at the same time accepting his own responsibilities. Lastly, the pastor/completer concept of pastoral ministry could be an effective tool for training future pastors in Bible college and seminary.26

The Laity as Ministers

The teaching of Scripture is clear concerning the role of the


26Ibid., 64-65.
pastor-teacher as one who trains believers for ministry. Therefore, the mission of the church is fulfilled when the pastor-teacher equips the laity to share the responsibility of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). However, lay ministry will not evolve without a strategy. The best strategy is one in which the believer feels a call to ministry from Jesus Christ. This strategy includes an inventory of spiritual gifts so that the believer will be able to identify his or her spiritual gift(s) and apply them appropriately to a particular ministry. Thus, the main problem of the church is how to motivate laity involvement in ministry. If the church can solve the problem of laity apathy, then it will be able to solve two additional problems.

The first problem to be solved would be the internal "people problems" that come from non-involvement in ministry. Tillapaugh defines "people problems" as the "rear-echelon griping and gossiping." Such problems include complaints about the preaching, the wrong color carpet or paint, and the overspending of money. Some "people problems" will still occur, but the griping and gossiping will be reduced if the laity are involved in ministry.

The second problem to be solved would be disobedience to the Great Commission. Jesus' last command to the church was, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8 NKJV). The church is commanded to spread the gospel throughout the world. According to Tillapaugh, "If a church is not operating at maximum in terms of the Great Commission, it is a

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27Tillapaugh, Unleashing the Church. 125.
disobedient church." The church has the enormous potential of fulfilling this command because each believer has been gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ministry to the body.

One of the ways the laity can progress in their spiritual lives would be through ministry involvement. The responsibility of the church would be to provide an atmosphere in which ministry will be possible. In other words, the church needs to maximize its strengths (ministry) and minimize its weaknesses (internal problems). This move could be promoted by giving the church leadership the authority and the trust to manage the rear echelon jobs and needs of the church.

However important the pastor may be, the primary motivator for the laity to become involved in ministry is God, not the pastor. Tillapaugh states, "If people are doing what God has called them to do, then probably they are doing what they want to do." Although there are exceptions to this rule, God is the One who instills in us the desire to do ministry. The motivation comes from within the believer by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The believer will continue to be involved in his/her ministry as a result of a desire to be obedient to the Lord. Also, Tillapaugh cautions that "A ministering laity who stays on the front lines, however, will require leaders who think, pray, plan and stay on the front lines themselves."

The secondary motivator for the laity to be involved in ministry

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29Ibid.

30Ibid., 130.

31Ibid., 136.
is the development of his/her inner being. Robert E. Slocum states,

Christians who develop their hearts will make demonstrable progress at getting their act together. And Christians who are getting their act together will be witnesses and ministers to people of the high-tech-age whose lives are fragmenting and disintegrating in the midst of the greatest affluence and success in the history of the world. 

Slocum suggests that the human heart has five unique dimensions: the emotional, the volitional, the ethical, the intellectual, and the spiritual. The goal of transforming the heart is to reshape "the interior of our lives according to God’s plans for the heart." The transformation of the heart enables God to use His people to reshape the church and the world. This renewal of the heart takes place when ordinary Christians open up their intellects, emotions, ethics, wills, and spiritualities to God. When God reveals His thoughts, feelings, discernment of good and evil, and will, then people’s hearts are transformed.

In their book, Growing a Healthy Church, Spader and Mayes suggest four criteria that can be used to determine those who are responsive for ministry. First, is faithfulness to the Lord and to the body demonstrated by the willingness to strive for consistency. Faithfulness is the believer’s desire to live in a manner which will be pleasing to the Lord, and this faithfulness is demonstrated in the actions of the believer. Also, faithfulness to the body the church is important and would be observed in the believer’s involvement in programs and people’s lives in the body.

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32 Slocum, Maximize Your Ministry, 81.
33 Ibid., 90.
34 Ibid., 90.
The second criteria would be availability demonstrated on a practical level. In other words, the believer's schedule should not conflict with his/her availability for ministry. However, if the believer's schedule does not permit him/her to participate, there may be some possible reasons. Perhaps it is not the right time for him/her to be equipped for ministry. The believer's schedule may be out of control, and it is time to reconsider the commitment factor. It may be that times set aside for equipping training are too rigid and need to be adjusted.

The third criteria would be teachability. The true believer has a hunger to learn. The one who is teachable is the one who recognizes that everyone has so far to go to be like Christ that in essence we are all just beginners. Another characteristic for one who is teachable is an appetite for the Word of God and a zeal to grow in Christlikeness.

The final criteria would be enthusiasm about God's work, which is characterized by a willingness to speak about the work of God in one's life. The enthusiastic believer's conversation is often centered on topics including concepts learned from Scripture, answers to prayer, and fellowship with other believers.35

Therefore, the development of a lay equipping ministry program in the church is built upon the basic tools of teaching, prayer, testing, and suffering. The foundation of a lay-equipping ministry should be based upon the believers' spiritual gifts. The pastor's role is to equip the laity for ministry. Through this process the body is being edified and God is being glorified.

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35Spader and Mayes, Growing a Healthy Church, 134-137.
CHAPTER 7
DEVELOPING AN EQUIPPING MINISTRY PROGRAM FOR A LOCAL CHURCH

Areas Of Equipping Ministry

It is apparent that both the professional pastor and the laity have been called and gifted by God for the purpose of ministry. The pastors are the equippers and the laity are the ministers. Herschel Hobbs in his book, You Are Chosen, suggests four areas of ministry: geographical, spiritual, fellowship, and social. The geographical area is based upon Acts 1:8, in which Jesus told the disciples to begin their ministry in Jerusalem, move into Judea, then further out to Samaria until they had reached the "end of the earth." Although not everyone in the local body can go everywhere, the local body can minister wherever they are by giving their witness for Christ through word and deed. The spiritual area is based upon the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. It should be understood that the Great Commission was given to all believers and not just to disciples. The fellowship area comes from the fact that we are priests to each other: therefore, we are responsible for one another. The social area includes not only witnessing with the spiritual gospel, but also ministering to those in need both within and outside of the body of Christ (Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 4:34-37; 2 Corinthians 8-9).¹

In his book *Maximize Your Ministry*, Robert E. Slocum suggests that the laity can minister in the following areas. The first area is in the church scattered, which is defined as the church from Sunday to Sunday. In other words, lay people will build their lives around the fact that God will use them to bring the body of Christ to life in the world. The second area is found in the area of work. It is here that the laity spend the overwhelming majority of their time. The third area is found in the area of marriage and family, because the family needs leadership and discipline in order to be part of the Christian community. The fourth area is in government. The responsibility of the governed is to obey the ruling authorities particularly as they maintain order. The fifth area is found within the church gathered, where the believer has been called to be and to serve.²

Dann Spader and Gary Mayes in *Growing a Healthy Church* identify specific levels of ministry involvement. Their specific levels of ministry involvement reflect increased risks and personal growth in the area of development. They give labels to each of the identified levels of ministry.

The first level of ministry, M1 Ministry Projects, includes activities such as delivering food, gathering clothing, building projects, or doing "fix it" projects. The focus of M1 ministry is to meet people, fulfill their needs, and provide training for the workers.

The second level of ministry, M2 Ministry to Nonpeers, focuses on providing ministry to others within one's same culture, excluding his

own peer group. M2 ministry projects would include adults working with children, children or youth ministering to older adults, or special ministries traveling to other churches.

The third level of ministry, M3 Ministry Cross-Cultural Ministry to Nonpeers, is to provide ministry to others in another culture possibly in another location. M3 ministry projects would include short-term mission trips and work with ethnic ministries within one's own geographical area.

The fourth level of ministry, M4 Ministry to Believing Peers: Edification, provides ministry within the local body of Christ. M4 ministry projects would include teaching an adult Sunday School class, leading a Bible Study, or participating in a lay counseling ministry.

The fifth level of ministry, M5 Ministry to Nonbelieving Peers: Expansion, is an intentional effort to build better relationships with non-Christians particularly friends. This level of ministry training helps the believer to develop a friendship with those who are nonbelievers for redemptive purposes. In other words, the believer becomes like Jesus, a "friend to sinners."

The sixth level of ministry, M6 Ministry to Nonbelieving Peers: Extension, comprises evangelism and discipleship at a peer level. The believer at this level spreads the gospel through his/her relationships with nonbelievers. Also, the person who brings the gospel to nonbelievers will also be able to provide discipleship to these individuals when they accept Christ as their Savior.

In the seventh level of ministry, M7 Ministry to Nonbelieving Peers: Explosion, people develop their personal strategy for reaching
and discipling others. This level of ministry takes advantage of existing relationships with nonbelievers. The believer at this level of ministry is seeking to increase his sphere of influence and initiate relationships through a number of different areas such as work, school, sports, etc.\(^3\)

Regardless of the area or level of ministry it must be remembered that God is anxious to use every follower of Jesus Christ in order to reach the world with the gospel. Also, spiritual growth of the believer includes growing through ministry involvement and responsibilities. Thus, an equipping ministry will help the believer to grow in faith and obedience to Christ.

However, the development of an equipping ministry program in a local church should begin with the implementation of a spiritual gifts discovery program. The discovery of spiritual gifts will enable believers to discover the spiritual gifts that the Lord has given to them. At the same time, it will help believers to determine how their spiritual gifts can enable them to minister in the area that the Lord has called them.

Robert E. and Janet Logan in *Spiritual Gifts Implementation* suggest an action plan that involves seven phases. Phase one decides what spiritual gifts need to be used in one's church. This phase includes a survey of the various approaches to spiritual gift definitions. Also at this phase, a decision should be made as to what survey instrument will be used or developed to determine spiritual

Phase two defines worker needs and ministry opportunities. This phase includes a survey to identify the ministry roles and tasks which should be performed in the church. Also, this process entails the writing of a job description for each of the ministry positions.

Phase three designs a placement system suitable for one's church. This phase requires a decision on how the pastor(s) will structure gift-based ministry in the church. Such strategies may include the teaching of spiritual gifts in new members' classes, gift discovery groups, or spiritual gifts workshops. This phase also includes the preparation of materials that will be needed before interviewing and placing people in ministry positions.

Phase four prepares leaders before "going public." At this phase permission should be obtained from the church leadership before implementation of a spiritual gifts discovery program. After permission has been granted then the spiritual gifts discovery program should be shared with other key leaders and ministry coordinators. Finally, the pastor or spiritual gift coordinator should begin recruiting and training spiritual gifts advisors and/or other leaders.

Phase five educates the congregation about spiritual gifts. This phase includes the development of a plan of action to introduce a spiritual gifts ministry to the church. It is at this phase that the teaching of spiritual gifts will begin for the other members of the church.

Phase six guides people into appropriate ministry positions. This phase includes the conducting of spiritual gifts interviews and follow-
ups to ensure placement in ministry positions suitable to individuals' spiritual gifts.

Phase seven continues the education and placement process indefinitely. This phase will include implementing regular opportunities to receive spiritual gift instruction, updating ministry positions descriptions, conducting regular advisory meetings, and evaluating program effectiveness to improve spiritual gifts discovery ministry.4

Reviews of Selected Spiritual Gifts Discovery Programs

The following reviews of selected spiritual gifts discovery programs are the actual programs that were considered for implementation at New Lebanon. Two major criteria were used in evaluating these programs. First, the program should be in agreement with the doctrine of New Lebanon Church. Second, the program should be simple and easy to understand.

Discovering Spiritual Gifts

The unique feature of this spiritual gifts discovery program is that it is designed to be used in small groups. The goal of this program is "to release believers into meaningful and fruitful service for the growth and health of the Body of Christ."5 The Discovering Spiritual Gifts Leader's Guide is designed to help the leaders.


including pastors, staff members or lay persons, to increase their information concerning spiritual gifts and to serve as a reference guide while the program is being taught.

This program is designed specifically for the small group of eight to twelve persons. The suggested format is for twelve or thirteen consecutive weeks of one-hour sessions. This material is suitable to be taught in adult Bible classes, home groups, a group specifically established for discovering spiritual gifts, or any small group setting. However, it should be noted that the key to success for this program is each individual's commitment to participate in the program throughout its duration.

The leader of this program will need to develop his strategy for spiritual gift implementation, which necessitates having an understanding of where he would want the congregation to go with spiritual gifts before using this program. The program contains and recommends Robert and Janet Logan's *Spiritual Gifts Implementation Leader's Guide* for mobilizing the congregation for ministry according to spiritual gifts. Included within this program pact are a Leader's Guide, Student's Workbook, Assignment Pack, and two spiritual gifts inventories.6

This program was not chosen for implementation at New Lebanon because it identified the charismatic or sign gifts as being applicable for the church today. Also, the teaching of the sign gifts of healing, miracles, and speaking and interpretation of tongues did not correspond

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6The two spiritual gift questionnaires consist of the *Heights Spiritual Gift Survey*, and the *Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire*. they both identify twenty-five spiritual gifts.
with the doctrinal teaching of the church. Furthermore, the material and content of the lesson plans appeared to be complex and difficult to understand.

**Team Ministry: A Guide to Spiritual Gifts and Lay Involvement**

The philosophy of *Team Ministry* involves utilizing all believers in the work of ministry in the local church. The goal of this program is to achieve balance within the church while reaching, teaching, and nurturing. *Team Ministry* has four foundational beliefs. First, God has given every believer at least one spiritual gift which will equip him/her to minister to the needs of others. Second, the local church should utilize the spiritual gifts of its believers in order to meet the needs of those within and outside of the church. Third, the purpose of the church is to reach, teach, and nurture people with the Word of God, thereby bringing them to maturity in the Lord. Lastly, every Christian should be a witness for Christ regardless of evangelistic methodology, ministry, or position in the church.

The program purports that it will achieve three results if the program is implemented according to its guidelines. First, people will be reached with the gospel, resulting in the numerical growth of the church. Second, lay participation in the church ministry will increase. As a result, more people will have their needs met, and spiritual growth will occur. Finally, Christians will find excitement and fulfillment in the ministry of the church, resulting in spiritual, social, and

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8Ibid.
emotional growth.\textsuperscript{9}

The Team Ministry approach to discovering spiritual gifts is a seven-step approach that should be repeated biannually as part of the total program of the church. The program consists of a textbook, teacher guide, student workbooks, and the spiritual gifts inventory test. The program recommends that the material be taught initially in a workshop; however, twelve consecutive week sessions can also be utilized during Sunday School or Training Hour. Also, the program recommends that new members of the church be encouraged to take this class. The program suggests that the pastor teach the initial workshop or the first twelve-week series; however, he should train someone else to take over the class in the future, perhaps a Director of Lay Involvement.

At the conclusion of the training sessions, commitments should be obtained from the people who have been able to recognize their spiritual gifts as a result of taking the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Questionnaire. Also, these individuals should be placed in ministry positions which are available in the church. However, the Team Ministry program does not address this issue.

This program was not selected for implementation at New Lebanon because the spiritual gifts questionnaire was considered to be inadequate. The questionnaire identified only nine gifts: evangelism, prophecy, teaching, exhortation, pastor/shepherd, showing mercy, serving, giving, and administration. It was determined that this program could prove to be confusing to the students being considered for

a spiritual gifts discovery program since the questionnaire tested for only nine gifts.

**Spiritual Gifts Discovery Workshop**

This program is designed to help believers to identify and use their spiritual gifts. The goal is to enable believers to discover, develop and use their spiritual gifts for the growth of the church. The material of this program is based on the book *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* by C. Peter Wagner. The program recommends that the material be taught in a six-hour workshop or six consecutive one hour study sessions. The material consists of a *Leader’s Guide, Participant’s Workbook, Spiritual Gifts Mobilization Leader’s Workbook,* and the *Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire.* The material is designed to be used in adult study groups. The study material on the spiritual gifts is not exhaustive or dogmatic in approach, but it is designed for the leader and student to initiate a study of spiritual gifts.

Also, this program recommends that the leader develop a strategy for the utilization of spiritual gifts prior to the initiation of the workshop. It is also recommended that the leader be prepared to guide people into the ministry positions which best suit their spiritual gifts. The program suggests that the nature of the church and the believers' stewardship of the gifts God has entrusted to them be taught from the pulpit. However, this program was not implemented at New Lebanon because it also identified the sign gifts as being applicable today for the church. Also, the program outline was complex and

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The Statement of Methodology

It has been noted that there is a biblical and theological basis for the involvement of laity in the work of ministry. The basis for lay involvement is founded in the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. The question then relates to how the laity will be equipped to do the work of ministry.

In his book, *Prepare Your Church for the Future*, Carl F. George has suggested that in the past the minister motivated members to participate in church ministries through shame and guilt. He has also noted that in the past church members felt obligated to support the ministries of their church. The pastor expected the members to sit through a forty-five minute lecture, whether or not it related to their daily lives. However, because of the changes in our society, people come to church activities and ministries expecting their problems to be addressed. George states, "They [are] willing to get involved in church, but only if doing so will help answer their personal cries for help."11

Therefore, the equipping ministry to be developed should be adequate to meet the day-to-day needs of the laity while at the same time providing ministry opportunities for lay involvement. Thus, the equipping ministry will need to be based upon the spiritual gifts of the laity. Using their spiritual gifts, the laity will gain a greater

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12Ibid.
awareness of their God-called ministry and will be able to provide spiritual care for the benefit of others.

**A Model of a Spiritual Gifts Discovery Program**

A spiritual gifts discovery program should assist believers in discovering their total giftedness and enable them to manage these gifts for the glory of God. When spiritual gifts are properly utilized, then believers will serve Christ and edify the body of Christ. Recognizing and using their spiritual gifts will help believers relate to one another and respect each other's giftedness. Spiritual believers should also be better equipped to maintain their vital spiritual relationship with Christ by expressing their giftedness.

The implementation of a spiritual gifts discovery program was implemented by using small groups (see Appendix 3). This model program has been taught on four different occasions. The spiritual gifts discovery program was taught for the adult class of Vacation Bible School, in which a number of key church leaders participated; for a new couple's Sunday School class; for Wednesday Evening Bible Study, in which the Board of Deacons and their wives participated; and a Tuesday night Bible Study at Mt. Bethel Christian Church in Stokesdale, N.C. The most effective way for this program to be implemented was for the pastor of New Lebanon Church to be the teacher of each of these sessions. The utilization of the pastor as the teacher for these sessions was necessary in order to create interest, but more importantly it was his responsibility as the equipper to share his vision for this ministry to the church. However, it should be noted that it is his responsibility to train someone else to become the director for this new
ministry.

In his book, *The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God*, Greg Ogden states that the small group is the basic and essential building block of the church today. According to Ogden, the potential to mobilize the body for ministry is found in the small-group structure. The advantage of small groups is that they will be led by equipped members who have rediscovered a call to ministry by realizing their spiritual gifts to carry out the ministry. The equipping of these leaders multiplies the number of those who will be able to provide ministry needs. Ogden explains, "This multiplies the number of shepherds in the church and puts the pastor’s focus not on being the shepherd to each and every member of the church, but particularly on those who share the shepherding responsibility."

The resource material in this program contains leader’s lesson plan, student handouts, and a spiritual gifts discovery test. In this program two different spiritual gifts discovery inventories may be utilized, *Spiritual Gifts Inventory Questionnaire* and *Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts*. Each student will receive a student handout for the lesson. This is not included in this Doctor of Ministry project. This handout will contain blank spaces where appropriate words, phrases, or comments can be filled in while the lecture is being presented. Also, the handouts will provide the student with a copy of material presented in each class session and will be useful for later review.

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14 Ibid.
The objective of this project was for the pastor to equip the members of New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church with a knowledge of spiritual gifts in order to give them a better understanding of the role of pastor and laity. The Scriptural basis for the objective was found in Ephesians 4:11-12. "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (NKJV).

The long-term goal was for the laity to be trained in spiritual gifts, enabling them to minister to those inside and outside of the church. Therefore, the work of ministry in this traditional church was transformed into a laity-involved ministry equipped by its pastor and leaders. The first step in achieving this goal was to develop a working relationship between the pastor and the laity by fostering a better understanding of spiritual gifts and their importance in the body of Christ.

The implementation of this program produced the following expectations. First, the membership became more actively involved in motivating the church to grow as a result of some members' discovery that their spiritual gift was evangelism. This growth was realized through spiritual growth at first. Numerical growth followed later because those whose gift was evangelism needed additional training in sharing their faith. However, it was noted that additional training must be provided to others with other spiritual gifts as well. Second, there was an increase in lay involvement. This expectation was realized in the Couple's Sunday School class when two of its members identified
their spiritual gifts as teaching. Since the inception of this new class, these two have become team teachers. Also, those who have participated in this program and were already holding elected responsibilities in the church began to approach their responsibilities with renewed vigor and anticipation in fulfilling the mission of the church. Third, a harmonious working relationship was established between the professional pastor, the equ ipper, and the laity, the ministers. Finally, God raised up men and women who were committed to carry forth the work of ministry in this congregation.

A lecture type of methodology was utilized in teaching the course. A lesson was prepared for each of the topics outlined in the Table of Contents (see Appendix 3). The lesson required prayer, Bible study, and thought in planning. The teacher began by creating an atmosphere of interest. Also, other approaches were utilized such as a contemporary story, thought provoking questions, object lesson, and transparencies. The complete program was taught according to plan and outline. It consisted of six consecutive sessions of at least one hour in duration. However, five consecutive sessions of at least one hour and fifteen minutes would achieve the same goal.

At the conclusion of the course, students were given the Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts for the purpose of discovering their spiritual gifts. This inventory was used because it identifies sixteen spiritual gifts and was more adaptable for the needs of New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church.
Evaluation of a Spiritual Gifts Discovery Program

The program as implemented at New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church has the following strengths. First, approximately half of the active members of New Lebanon Church have completed this course. A significant result of the implementation of this program can be seen in the two major boards of the church. The Board of Deacons made progress in their ability to give spiritual leadership to the church. Also, the Board of Trustees are equipped to adequately handle the administrative needs of the church. Those who have identified their spiritual gifts are using their gifts not only in their sphere of ministry, but they are reaching out beyond their area to others within and outside of the church. Second, there was an increase in lay involvement particularly in the area of teaching. The discovering and understanding of spiritual gifts gave the participants a desire to serve. Also, they gained confidence to use their spiritual gifts for the glory of God and ministry to one another. Third, the program was designed for New Lebanon Church; however, it is adaptable and useful for another church in the same community. It was designed to be simple and easy to implement. Fourth, the program could be taught in many different settings such as a week-long Vacation Bible School class or a class for a period of six weeks. Fifth, the spiritual gifts that were studied are in agreement with the theological and biblical teachings of New Lebanon Church. Sixth, the program utilized small groups, which created an atmosphere that was conducive to questions from the students as well as discussion between teacher and students. This open forum kept each session from becoming just another "lecture." Lastly, the pastor as
teacher helped to promote the importance of spiritual gifts discovery. The program also offered the pastor an opportunity to share his vision for the usage of spiritual gifts in the congregation.

Weaknesses of this model spiritual gifts discovery program were also noted. First, the program should have included a session on service opportunities in New Lebanon Church as well as ministry descriptions for each position in the church. This area could have been easily implemented because the Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts contains a section entitled "Service Opportunities." Second, the program should have been used by the Nominating Committee of the church as a prerequisite guide when considering candidates for various positions of ministry within the church. Third, the program should have provided for the training of an additional leader who would eventually assume the responsibility of teaching this program as well as being the director of lay ministry. Fourth, the program lacked a session for the purpose of evaluating those who had previously taken the spiritual gift inventory. The purpose of this evaluation would be to see if previously identified spiritual gift(s) are still prevalent in the ministry of the individual. Fifth, an evaluation of the sessions should have been given to the students who participated so that necessary improvements to the program could be made. Though an evaluation was not given at implementation of the program, one has been included for future use (see Appendix 4). Lastly, a training program should have been developed for each of the different gifts. Therefore, when a commitment to serve has been made in a specific ministry, then assimilation in that particular ministry would be possible through orientation and training. In other
words, each believer would feel adequately prepared to make their unique contribution to service for the Lord.
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

It is apparent from this Doctor of Ministry project and study that the dichotomy between the professional pastor and the laity should come to an end. However, research evidence suggests that the clergy and laity dichotomy still exists today. As Kennon Callahan suggested the present cultural movement continues to shift from volunteerism to professionalism. As previously noted, the low expectations of professional pastors for the laity and the high expectations of the laity for the professional pastor have been the main reasons for this dichotomy. However, this study noted that all believers are God's ministers; the professional pastor/laity dichotomy is not biblical; and there is one team consisting of both equippers (pastors) and ministers (laity).

It has also been noted in this study that the contemporary church in America is experiencing significant changes. First is the decline in membership in the mainline denominations, and second is the growth of the megachurch. Third, the church is witnessing the disappearance of the protestant ethic and Biblical literacy. Lastly, the churches in America are placing a greater demand on the leadership of the professional clergy and greater participation from the laity.

For the church in America to rise above these significant changes, it must be willing to exceed traditional expectations. In order to make
changes. the church does not have to change the Bible, Gospel, or doctrine; but it will be forced to change its methodology.

Therefore, the church must be willing to resurrect the biblical teaching of the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. This is the key to the future for the church. The Bible teaches that every believer is a priest without the need of another human mediator. This believer has received a call from God for the purpose of service and has been equipped with a spiritual gift(s). Thus, the church has the responsibility of affirming the call of the believer to service with his/her spiritual gift(s). An equipping ministry in a local church must therefore begin with the discovery of its members' spiritual gifts. The primary responsibility of an equipping ministry, particularly the development of spiritual gifts lies with the pastor. To start an equipping ministry without each member's discovery of his/her spiritual gift will possibly lead to discouragement, and thus will put both pastor and laity back to where they started. Also, should the church choose not to develop an equipping ministry, it will continue to place the total burden of ministry responsibility upon the shoulders of the professional pastor.

The ministry of the body of Christ can become enjoyable and spiritually rewarding when both the professional clergy and laity are jointly involved. The laity will respond to the opportunity for ministry in the church especially if their ministry will be meaningful and practical, and if it gives them the opportunity to serve by using their spiritual gifts. Also, if pastors will equip the laity for ministry, they in turn will enhance the necessity, value, and the God-
given power of the pastoral office. It is apparent that the work of equipping is a continual ministry for the pastor. Therefore, the laity should stand with the pastor as a partner in ministry; and the pastor should stand as an equal with God's people, using his gifts to lead and equip others for the work of ministry in the body of Christ.
APPENDIX 1-LAY MINISTRY SURVEY

Following each statement are four possible responses: SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), and SD (strongly disagree). Please circle the response that is closest to your level of agreement or disagreement.

1. The New Testament teaches that all Christians are ministers and should be involved in the work of ministry.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

2. The paid professional pastor is responsible for doing the work of evangelism and bringing in new members of the church.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

3. Church members don't really want to be involved in ministry. They should be content to pay the pastor to do the work of the church.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

4. The seminary or Bible college trained professional minister is the only one really qualified to do ministry.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

5. Those involved in full-time paid professional ministry are to be accorded special status and privileges in the church.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

6. The New Testament makes no distinction between paid pastoral staff and non paid church members.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

7. The distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members became evident in the church centuries after the New Testament was written.
   
   SA   A   D   SD

8. The distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members is
the result of power politics rather than a result of Biblical Theological conviction.

9. Paid professional pastors would rather that their church members not be involved in ministry.

10. Paid professional pastors do not want to take the time to train their church members to do ministry.

11. Paid professional pastors believe that church members are not competent to do ministry and would end up hurting the church.

12. Church members who are doing creative and challenging things on their jobs or careers want comparable challenges in their church involvement.

13. It's important for the church to train church members for ministry.

14. It is best to use church members to teach Sunday School, work with children's programs, or in the music program, but not to preach, counsel, minister to the sick, dying, and bereaved.

15. Paid professional pastors feel threatened when talented church members become involved in ministry.

16. With proper training, any church member should be allowed to perform any ministry which any paid professional pastors perform.

17. A key to church growth is a trained, mobilized church members performing evangelism and discipleship ministries.
18. The ministry is what paid professional pastors perform.

   SA   A   D   SD

19. Church members help at church, but they do not have a specific ministry.

   SA   A   D   SD

20. It is important for the church to call additional paid professional staff members to enable it to perform God's work, than to train church members.

   SA   A   D   SD

21. The list of Spiritual Gifts found in the New Testament are for today's church.

   SA   A   D   SD

22. A Spiritual Gift and a talent (special ability) are the same.

   SA   A   D   SD

23. The Spiritual Gifts and the Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc.) are the same.

   SA   A   D   SD

24. The Spiritual Gifts and the New Testament officers (bishop, pastor, elder, deacon, evangelist, apostle, etc.) are the same.

   SA   A   D   SD

25. Are you a church:

   _____ paid staff worker   _____ volunteer worker (unpaid)
   _____ interested church member (not presently involved in ministry)

26. Sex:   _____ Male   _____ Female

27. About how many times per month are you involved in the activities of this church (Please check the one that applies):

   _____ 0-2   _____ 3-4   _____ 5-6   _____ 7-8   _____ 9-10
   _____ more than 12

[Note: This survey was adapted from a Lay Ministry Survey developed by Richard E. McCulley.]
APPENDIX 2-LAY MINISTRY SURVEY TABLES

The Lay Ministry Survey was administered at New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church, Reidsville, N.C.; Mt. Bethel Christian Church, Stokesdale, N.C.; Kallam Grove Christian Church, Madison, N.C.; and Bethlehem Christian Church, Altamahaw, N.C. As stated in chapter one, a church in Danville, Va., Third Avenue Congregational Christian Church, was asked to participate; however, the pastor felt that the survey was not appropriate for the given congregation. The survey was given after the classes on spiritual gifts were taught at New Lebanon and Mt. Bethel only. The data collected was compiled as one group. The data provided in Table 1 gives the characteristics of the sample. Also, note in the following tables that "N" represents the number of respondents who answered that particular question in the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1 (SURVEY QUESTIONS 25-27)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you a church:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid staff worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Activity Per Month:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 2 (SURVEY QUESTION 1)
The New Testament teaches that all Christians are ministers and should be involved in the work of ministry.  
(N=99)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 3 (SURVEY QUESTION 2)
The paid professional pastor is responsible for doing the work of evangelism and bringing in new members of the church. (N=98)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4 (SURVEY QUESTION 3)
Church members don't really need to be involved in ministry. They should be content to pay the pastor to do the work of the church. (N=99)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67.68%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### TABLE 5 (SURVEY QUESTION 4)
The seminary or Bible college trained professional minister is the only one really qualified to do ministry. (N=96)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38.54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6 (SURVEY QUESTION 5)
Those involved in full-time paid professional ministry should receive special status and privileges in the church. (N=98)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 7 (SURVEY QUESTION 6)
The New Testament makes no distinction between paid pastoral staff and non paid church members. (N=89)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.37%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
TABLE 8 (SURVEY QUESTION 7)
The distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members became evident in the church centuries after the New Testament was written. (N=80)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>61.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TABLE 9 (SURVEY QUESTION 8)
The distinction between paid pastoral staff and church members is the result of power politics rather than a result of Biblical/Theological conviction. (N=83)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.23%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

TABLE 10 (SURVEY QUESTION 9)
Paid professional pastors would rather that their church members not be involved in ministry. (N=91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39.56%</td>
</tr>
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### TABLE 11 (SURVEY QUESTION 10)
Paid professional pastors do not want to take the time to train their church members to do ministry. (N=94)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.85%</td>
</tr>
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### TABLE 12 (SURVEY QUESTION 11)
Paid professional pastors believe that church members are not competent to do ministry and would end up hurting the church. (N=90)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>61.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 13 (SURVEY QUESTION 12)
Church members who are doing creative and challenging things on their jobs or careers want comparable challenges in their church involvement. (N=93)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>77.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 14 (SURVEY QUESTION 13)**

It is important for the church to train church members for ministry. (N=98)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 15 (SURVEY QUESTION 14)**

It is best to use church members to teach Sunday School, work with children’s programs, or in the music program, but not to preach, counsel, minister to the sick, dying, and bereaved. (N=97)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 16 (SURVEY QUESTION 15)**

Paid professional pastors feel threatened when talented church members become involved in ministry. (N=91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 17 (SURVEY QUESTION 16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With proper training, any church member should be allowed to perform any ministry which any paid professional pastors perform. (N=95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 18 (SURVEY QUESTION 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A key to church growth is trained, mobilized church members performing evangelism and discipleship ministries. (N=95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 19 (SURVEY QUESTION 18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ministry is what paid professional pastors perform. (N=92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 20 (SURVEY QUESTION 19)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Church members help at church, but they do not have a specific ministry. (N=96)

**TABLE 21 (SURVEY QUESTION 20)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important for the church to call additional paid professional staff members to enable it to perform God's work, than to train church members (volunteers). (N=93)

**TABLE 22 (SURVEY QUESTION 21)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list of Spiritual Gifts found in the New Testament are for today's church. (N=90)
### TABLE 23 (SURVEY QUESTION 22)

A Spiritual Gift and a talent (special ability) are the same. (N=92)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 24 (SURVEY QUESTION 23)

The Spiritual Gifts and the Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) are the same. (N=87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 25 (SURVEY QUESTION 24)

The Spiritual Gifts and the New Testament officers (bishop, pastor, elder, deacon, evangelist, apostle, etc) are the same. (N=85)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3-DISCOVERING SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Discovering Spiritual Gifts

Introduction

The purpose of Discovering Spiritual Gifts is to give believers a way of determining their spiritual gifts, and in doing so to help them find a place of ministry in the church. The workbook is divided into six lessons which offer practical guidelines and suggested readings to aid in discovering spiritual gifts. In addition, the lessons require the student to complete the sections titled "128 Spiritual Gift Statements" and "Service Opportunities" in the Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts.

God has a blueprint for His church, part of which is to reach this world with His truth. In the Old Testament, God used the nation of Israel as the means to reach the world. In the Gospels, God used His Son Jesus Christ and His disciples as a means to reach the world. However, since the second chapter of Acts up to this present time, God has been using the church as the vehicle through which He is communicating His truth to the world. We communicate that truth not only by the words we speak but by our actions. In John 13:35, Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Also, in John 17:21-23, Jesus prayed that our unity would show the world that He was sent by the Father. Jesus prayed,

That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me: that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

Therefore, our witness is not only a verbal communication of the gospel, but it is also the witness of our love and unity for one another. The church's greatest testimony to the world is unity based on humility and love.

Christ expects the church to be powerful and mature. In order for the church to be functioning, growing, witnessing, and manifesting His love to the world, God designed a blueprint within the confines of the true church, which is His body. In His blueprint, God has designed that every member in His body [the church] will have a certain gift or gifts within that body which will result in the health of the total church. The result will be a church that is growing with a unified witness.

The human body is an illustration of God's blueprint for the church. The human body has all kinds of organs, muscles, and bones that interact with one another. If just one of these organs, muscles, or
bones does not function, the whole body becomes sick. Every organ, muscle, and bone has a function that results in the total health or sickness of the body. Every believer has a vital spiritual gift or gifts which can serve as an organ, muscle, or bone of the body of Christ, the church. If the church is to be a unified dynamic with a strong testimony to the world, then every believer must exercise the gift or gifts that God has given him or her. A believer's spiritual gift makes the church healthy because it carries strength to the other vital parts of the church. However, if a believer refuses to exercise his or her spiritual gift or gifts, then the church becomes sick and crippled. Its growth, maturity, and witness to the world are retarded.

God has designed every believer to be a vital functioning organ, muscle, or bone. Therefore, if the church is to be healthy and thriving, then we as believers must minister to it. The Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 4:11-12, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Books for further reading:


Lesson 1: The Holy Spirit

Discovering spiritual gifts does not happen in a vacuum. In order for believers to discover their spiritual gifts, they must be growing spiritually and must be energized by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, to discover spiritual gifts, they must understand the importance of the Holy Spirit. In searching for their spiritual gifts, Christians are bewildered if they do not understand the One who bestows the gifts. Likewise, if they take the Holy Spirit out of the gifts, then they lose the supernatural quality of the gifts.

I. The divinity of the Holy Spirit
A. The divine names - He is called "the Spirit of God" in 1 Corinthians 2:11, meaning that He is the very person of God.
B. The divine attributes
   1. Omniscience (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)
   2. Omnipresence (Psalm 139:7)
   3. Omnipotence (Zechariah 4:6)
   4. Truth (1 John 5:6)
   5. Life (Romans 8:2) God is the living God.
   6. Love (2 Timothy 1:7) God is love.
C. The third person of the trinity
   1. The Holy Spirit is placed on the same level as God the Father and God the Son (Matthew 28:19).
   2. The Holy Spirit is called "another" Comforter by Jesus, who refers to Him as to another Self (John 14:16).
   3. The Lord is the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17).
   4. God is a Spirit (John 4:24).
   5. To lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God Himself (Acts 5:3-4).

II. The role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament
A. The Holy Spirit was not given to all. God clothed with His Spirit those whom he called to a special ministry
   1. Bezaleel for the construction of the tabernacle (Exodus 31:3)
   2. Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, etc., to be judges of Israel (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29)
   3. David to be king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:13)
   4. The prophets to write the Bible (1 Peter 1:10-11)
B. The Holy Spirit was temporarily given and could be withdrawn.
   2. Saul (1 Samuel 10:10; 16:14)
   3. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 2:2; 3:24)
   4. David (Psalm 51:11)
C. Before the cross and Pentecost the Holy Spirit could not do in men what He is doing now. For example, the Old Testament will state that the Holy Spirit was not within someone but upon someone. Numbers 11:25. "Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them [the Holy Spirit came upon], that they prophesied [manifested a gift], although they never did so again [the Holy Spirit left]." Therefore, the Holy Spirit may come, manifest a gift, and then leave.

D. The Holy Spirit acted upon the whole nation of Israel (Isaiah 63:10-11, 14).

E. The Holy Spirit also would use the enemies of God
   1. Balaam (Numbers 24:2)
   2. Messengers of Saul (1 Samuel 19:20-23)


A. The Holy Spirit would be poured out on all flesh and the house of Israel (Joel 2:28-29; Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 39:29; Acts 2:16-21, 38-39).

B. The Holy Spirit when given would remain forever (Isaiah 59:21).


D. The Holy Spirit shall rest upon the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator of the New Covenant (Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1; 2 Corinthians 3:6).

   1. The Holy Spirit is a Counselor who convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-11).
   2. The Holy Spirit teaches all things, reminds us of the words of Jesus, guides us in all truth, and brings glory to Jesus Christ (John 14:26; 16:13-15).
   3. The Holy Spirit is an Intercessor for us in our weakness (Romans 8:26-27).
   4. The Holy Spirit is the character developer in our lives or the Fruit Producer (Galatians 5:22-23).

Application

A. The Holy Spirit gives life.

B. The Holy Spirit performs miracles.

C. The Holy Spirit works in the hearts of men and women.

D. The Holy Spirit uses men and women as His instruments.

E. The Holy Spirit brings everything to pass by His help while nothing is accomplished without Him (Zechariah 4:6).

Assignment for Next Lesson:

Read Romans 12:1-8; I Corinthians 12-14; and Ephesians 4:1-16
Books for further reading:


Lesson 2: What is a Spiritual Gift?

Why are we studying spiritual gifts? First, we need to know about spiritual gifts because we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior; therefore, we are Christians. Secondly, we need to know about spiritual gifts because we believe that Jesus is our Lord, and we want to love Him and follow Him in the best possible way. Thirdly, we need to know about spiritual gifts because we want our church to be healthy and attractive, showing forth the love of God in our community. Therefore, in this lesson we want to determine just what the actual meaning of a spiritual gift is.

I. What is the definition of a spiritual gift?

A. The terms used for "spiritual gifts"

1. **Pneumatikon** is translated to mean "spirituals" in 1 Corinthians 12:1. The term "gifts" was supplied by the translators because that is the thrust of the passage.

2. **Charisma** means "gifts of grace." The root of this word charis means "grace." Grace is defined as "unmerited favor." God gives us something we do not deserve and cannot possibly earn. The two words are used together in Romans 1:11.

B. Some definitions for "spiritual gifts"

   a. "A gift... granted by the Spirit to every believer to empower him to serve within the framework of the body of Christ" (p. 20).
   b. "A gift is a divinely ordained spiritual ability through which Christ enables His church to execute its task on earth" (pp. 20-21).
   c. Gifts are "extraordinary endowments bestowed by the Holy Spirit sovereignly and undeservedly on believers as instruments for Christian service and church edification" (p. 21).
   d. A simple definition would be "A gift is a Spirit-given ability for Christian service."

2. Peter Wagner in his book, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, defines a spiritual gift as "a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the body of Christ according to God's grace for use within the context of the Body" (p. 42).

3. Three important facts can be learned from these definitions concerning spiritual gifts.
   a. The source of spiritual gifts is the special grace of
the Holy Spirit.
b. The nature of spiritual gifts is the spiritual
ability, endowment, and power.
c. The purpose of spiritual gifts is service, or
ministry, to edify saints.

II. Why were spiritual gifts given (Ephesians 4:11-16)?
A. Spiritual gifts were given for "...the equipping of the
saints for the work of ministry..." (4:12). Ministry finds
its full meaning through the gifts. Gifts are meaningless
without ministry.
B. Spiritual gifts were given to build up the body of Christ and
not its individual members.
1. "Till we all come to unity...to a perfect man..."
(4:13).
2. "...May grow up in all things into Him..." (4:15)
3. "...The whole body, joined and knit together by what
every joint supplies, according to the effective working
by which every part does its share..." (4:16).

III. Why are spiritual gifts plural instead of singular (1 Corinthians
12:1-4)? When the Apostle Paul used the word in any of its
various forms, he was referring to many gifts. Verse 4 can be
translated, "Now there are allotments or various kinds of gifts,
but the same Spirit."

IV. Where does the Bible give a list of spiritual gifts? The New
Testament gives six lists of spiritual gifts. The main list is
found in 1 Corinthians 12:28, where the gifts are listed in the
order of their importance to the body of Christ. The lists are
charted here for easy reference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Corinthians 12:8-10</th>
<th>1 Corinthians 12:28</th>
<th>1 Corinthians 12:29-30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word of wisdom</strong></td>
<td><strong>Apostleship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Apostleship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word of knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prophecy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prophecy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faith</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Miracles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Miracles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miracles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Healings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Healings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prophecy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Helps</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tongues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguishing of</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administrations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interpretation of</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>spirits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tongues</strong></td>
<td><strong>tongues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tongues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpretation of</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tongues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Romans 12:6-8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ephesians 4:11</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 Peter 4:11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prophecy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Apostleship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serving</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prophecy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Serving</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evangelism</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exhortation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pastor-Teacher</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Showing mercy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. **What spiritual gifts are not**

A. **Talents** - Spiritual gifts have to do with spiritual abilities while talents have to do with techniques and methods. However, talents and gifts can be related. For example, literary, oratorical, artistic, musical, or linguistic talents may be areas through which the Holy Spirit will use and enhance a person's gifts. Also, non-Christians can have a talent because of God's common grace which has been present from birth. However, no non-believer has a spiritual gift; only the believer is spiritually gifted.
Chart Showing Differences Between Talent and Gift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Talent</th>
<th>Gift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common grace of</td>
<td>Special grace of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Given</td>
<td>Present from natural</td>
<td>Present from new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>birth</td>
<td>birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Natural ability</td>
<td>Spiritual endowment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Instruction,</td>
<td>Spiritual growth of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>entertainment,</td>
<td>saints; Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inspiration on a</td>
<td>service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>natural level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Offices - A number of offices are mentioned in the New Testament such as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, elder (bishop), and deacon. However, these offices pertain to a person; whereas the Holy Spirit gives the individual that particular gift. The person who has a New Testament office should have the gift or gifts that correspond to that office. Otherwise, his office would be in name only. For example, a teacher would have the gift of teaching. However, a person can have the gift pertaining to an office without filling that office. Therefore, a person could have the gift of teaching but not the office of a teacher.

C. Ministries - A ministry in a church is not a spiritual gift, but it is the outlet for the employment of a spiritual gift.

D. Fruit of the Spirit - The gifts of the Spirit differ from the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, the possession of spiritual gifts does not determine the godliness of life.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart Contrasting Spiritual Gifts with the Fruit of the Spirit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Gifts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have to do with service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the means to an end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are what a man has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given from without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referred to in plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not all possessed by every believer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will cease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. Who gives and receives spiritual gifts?
A. The giver - The Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-9, 11, 28)
B. The recipient - believers (1 Corinthians 12:13)
   1. One or more gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18)
   2. Spiritual gifts may not be lost (Romans 11:29). Though the context of the passage is dealing with Israel, Paul is giving us the divine principle that salvation cannot be recalled. Therefore, the principle would apply to spiritual gifts as well. They cannot be recalled.

VII. How can we discover which spiritual gifts we have? Charles R. Swindoll in his book, *Spiritual Gifts*, suggests ways of discovering our spiritual gifts.
A. Be informed by researching the gifts to know the parameter of each one.
B. Be open: do not zero in on one gift to the exclusion of others.
C. Be available by being willing to be used by God in different areas of ministry even though you may not feel quite ready for the task.
D. Be sensible: do not force yourself to fit into a certain gift if it does not appear to be the one given to you. In order to discover our spiritual gifts, we will be using the *Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts*. Houts classifies the spiritual gifts in three major areas.
Houts Classification System of Spiritual Gifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Gifts</th>
<th>Support Gifts</th>
<th>Being Gifts</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apostleship</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
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<td>Evangelism</td>
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<td>Prophecy</td>
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<td>Mercy</td>
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Assignment: Complete the "My Talents Survey."

Books for further reading:


Lesson 3: Defining the Spiritual Gifts: The Public Gifts

Four major systems in the human body sustain it and give it physical life: skeletal, muscular, digestive, and circulatory. The body is dependent upon these systems. In a very unique sense, they correspond to the major public spiritual gifts that are to be found in the body of Christ, the Church. These gifts are the foundations and the pillars that support the church. The gifts that will be studied in this lesson are public in nature and revolve around the ministry of the Word of God in equipping the saints for ministry. Therefore, the public gifts are for encouragement.

I. The Gift of apostleship/missionary
Is this a gift for today? Yes and no! This gift may have a twofold aspect. In a restricted use of the term, the office of an apostle is finished. However, in a broader use of the term the gift of apostleship still functions as the missionary gift.

A. The restricted usage of the term
1. The apostles were ones who had been with Jesus (Acts 1:21-22).
2. The apostles had a personal call from Christ (Mark 3:14; John 20:21).
3. The apostles were witnesses of the resurrection (Acts 1:22).
4. The apostles laid the doctrinal foundation of the church (John 14:26; 16:13).
5. The apostles laid the structural foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20).
6. The apostles had power to work miracles (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 8:18).
7. The apostles will one day sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:29-30). Also, the names of the apostles will be inscribed on the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14).

B. Conclusions concerning the restricted usage of the term
1. The word “apostle” had an official usage limited to the Twelve (Acts 9:27; 1 Corinthians 15:7).
2. There could be no apostolic successors in later generations who could meet the qualifications of an apostle.
3. The office of apostle died when the apostles died.

C. The broader usage of the term can be found in the fact that others in the New Testament were called apostles, such as Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14); James, the Lord’s brother (Galatians 1:19); Silas and Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1;
D. The term "missionary" is one who is sent to minister transculturally with church-planting goals.
   1. Sent - the missionary is sent from a church as opposed to being called by a church.
   2. Transculturally - the missionary is one who has the ability to serve in another culture.
   3. Church-planting goals - the missionary is one who ministers with evangelistic goals.

E. Definition of gift: A New Testament office represented today by the Spirit-given ability to minister cross-culturally with the goal of planting churches [Houts]


G. Gift characteristics
   1. To preach obedience to the unsaved (Romans 1:5; Galatians 2:8)
   2. To equip the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12)
   3. To travel to a different culture to establish spiritual foundations as modeled by the ministry of Paul

H. Gift liabilities
   1. Manifestations in the flesh, thereby establishing power politics
   2. An authoritarian attitude at times when dealing with others
   3. A desire to move to a new area of ministry before the present ministry has sufficient foundation to stand

II. The gift of evangelism

A. Definition of gift
   1. The special ability to act as a productive instrument of God in soul-winning [Houts]
   2. The gift of proclaiming the Good News of salvation effectively so that people respond to the claims of Christ in conversion and in discipleship [Flynn]
   3. The special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to share the gospel with nonbelievers in such a way that men and women become Jesus' disciples and responsible members of the body of Christ [Wagner]

B. Biblical references: Acts 8:5-6; 8:26-40; 14:21; 21:8; Ephesians 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 4:5

C. Gift characteristics
   1. The desire to share the good news with everyone
   2. The ability to present clearly the message of salvation to nonbelievers
   3. The ability to communicate the Gospel in such a way that people consistently understand and respond by accepting Christ
   4. The desire to see others learn to share their faith with others for Jesus Christ
   5. An understanding without question God's desire for men
and women to be saved

D. Gift liabilities
1. The tendency to become offensive if one relies on own strength and insight to convert people
2. The tendency to become prideful over the number of converts led to Christ
3. An attempt to motivate people to accept Christ through guilt
4. The tendency to be very narrow in evangelistic focus and to make light of other spiritual gifts
5. The inability to listen well because of the desire to communicate the Gospel message
6. The view of people as "targets" instead of people with needs

III. The gift of helps/ministering

A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to provide timely assistance that will release other Christian workers for direct spiritual ministry [Houts]
2. The ability to serve the church in any supporting role, usually temporal, though sometimes spiritual, and the ability to serve joyfully and diligently wherever and whenever required [Flynn]
3. The ability that God gives to some members of the Body of Christ to invest the talents they have in life and ministry of other members of the Body, thus enabling the person helped to increase the effectiveness of his or her spiritual gifts [Wagner]


C. Gift characteristics
1. The special ability to see what needs to be done and have the desire to see that it is done
2. Unselfishness
3. Using the gift to assist others in other specific ministries
4. Satisfaction and joy in freeing others from responsibilities so that they can minister with their spiritual gifts
5. Joy in the ministry of others because they have helped

D. Gift liabilities
1. Difficulty in saying "no" when asked to help, even though at times one needs to say "no"
2. Tendency to overextend oneself physically and emotionally at times as a result of the inability to say "no"
3. Tendency to feel taken for granted or used if not affirmed for their support role
4. Tendency to take too much "ownership" in helping others, and not letting people help them
5. Difficulty in delegating responsibilities
6. Tendency to be helpful and end up causing interference at
7. Tendency to neglect own needs and family's needs in order to help others

IV. The gift of hospitality
A. Definition of gift: The special ability to provide an open home, a refuge to those in need of food, lodging and fellowship [Houts]
C. Gift characteristics: They have an open home at any time and often do not care what their home looks like
D. Gift liability: They have the tendency to be unable to say "no" when they need to

V. The gift of mercy
A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to aid the suffering or undeserving, and to spare them from punishment or penalties justly deserved [Houts]
2. The Spirit-guided ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering members of the body of Christ [Flynn]
3. The special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals, both Christian and non-Christian, who suffer distressing physical, mental, or emotional problems, and to translate that compassion into cheerfully-done deeds that reflect Christ's love and alleviate the suffering [Wagner]
C. Gift characteristics
1. Lifestyle of sincere kindness and compassion
2. A bond to those who are considered "outcasts" or "outsiders"
3. An attempt to relieve the source of suffering
4. The ability to minister to those who are ill, even the terminally ill
5. The ability to aid the unloved cheerfully and often without recognition
D. Gift liabilities
1. Tendency to be overly protective of the persons to whom they are rendering care
2. Tendency to take the offenses of those who have been hurt without realizing it
3. Tendency to let emotion be the basis for making decisions instead of reason
4. Tendency to terminate fellowship with those who appear to be insensitive to others
VI. The gift of prophecy
   A. Definition of gift
      1. The special ability to cause the authoritative Word of God's truth to shine (2 Peter 1:19. 1 Corinthians 14:3)
         including congregational preaching and lay utterances which explain and apply God's revelation for correction
         and edification [Houts]
      2. The Spirit-given ability to proclaim the written Word of God with clarity and to apply it to a particular
         situation with an emphasis on correction or edification [Flynn]
   C. Gift characteristics
      1. Pleading the cause of God to His people and the world
      2. Speaking forthrightly about the future [Bible prophecy] or about the present situation
      3. Proclaiming strength. comfort. and encouragement to believers
      4. Proclaiming the Scriptures with authority
   D. Gift liabilities
      1. Tendency to preach doom and despair rather than to strengthen and build up believers through challenging
         prophecy
      2. Tendency to be prideful and arrogant
      3. Tendency to convict instead of letting the Spirit
      4. Tendency to be selfish. blunt. and likely to stir up trouble
      5. Tendency to be unable to study but reliant on the research of others
      6. Difficulty in making friends.

VII. The gift of shepherding/pastoring
   A. Definition of gift
      1. The special ability to effectively guide. feed. and protect a flock of followers in Christ: also known as
         pastoring [Houts]
      2. The special ability to assume a long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of
         believers [Wagner]
   C. Nature of gift
      1. To guide
      2. To graze
      3. To guard
   D. Gift characteristics
      1. Loves being with and ministering to people
      2. Is able to provide care. nourishment. and protection over a period of time
      3. Is a people-person and not task-centered
4. Gains strength from helping and supporting others
5. Counsels and guides people

E. Gift liabilities
1. Inability to say "no" to others, at the expense of self and family
2. Tendency to be indecisive because of strong desire to be sensitive
3. Tendency to be overprotective of people, causing them to become dependent upon him
4. Tendency to control an individual's decisions out of the desire to "protect" him/her.
5. Tendency to struggle in releasing people to grow spiritually beyond his pastoral control

VIII. The gift of teaching

A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to give a detailed understanding of Biblical truth to those willing to learn [Houts]
2. The supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God [Flynn]
3. The special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to communicate information relevant to the health and ministry of the Body and its members in such a way that others will learn [Wagner]


C. Gift characteristics
1. A desire to communicate truth that is learned from the study of the Word of God
2. Biblical insight in dealing with life situations
3. Ability to communicate biblical truth so that people learn and remember what has been taught
4. Ability to present biblical knowledge and spiritual clearly
5. Ability to instruct for reproof, correction, and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16)

D. Gift liabilities
1. Tendency to appear that they have all the answers, leaving little room for discussion
2. Tendency to communicate too much information too quickly for the average learner
3. Tendency to promote their own insight as biblical and authoritative
4. Tendency to become prideful through their own learning
Lesson 4: Defining the Spiritual Gifts: The Support Gifts

In this lesson we will focus on the gifts of administration, exhortation, giving, and leadership. These are the gifts that support the Body; and, for the most part, they function within the Body in a private manner. Individuals with these gifts take on the personal ministry of encouraging, building up, and strengthening the Body. Therefore, the support gifts equip the Body while the public gifts encourage.

I. The gift of administration
   A. Definition of gift
      1. The special ability to work with and through followers toward achieving Biblical goals and organizational objectives [Houts]
      2. The Spirit-given ability to preside, govern, plan, organize, and administer with wisdom, fairness, example, humility, service, confidence, ease, and efficiency [Flynn]
      3. The special God-given ability to understand clearly the immediate and long-range goals of a particular unit of the body of Christ and to devise and execute effective plans for the accomplishment of those goals [Wagner]
   C. Gift characteristics
      1. To serve as a helmsman of a ship, to plot the course. Another analogy would be they are like the composer of a musical symphony: they put all the different parts of music together
      2. To carry the vision of the gifted leaders into reality; to put the details of the vision into a plan of action
      3. To provide clear guidance to the actual process of ministry
      4. To focus on the details of the vision, part by part, rather than the "big picture" of the vision
      5. To be task-masters rather than vision-sharers
      6. To plan carefully
   D. Gift liabilities
      1. Viewing people as "task completers" rather than people
      2. Showing favoritism to those who seem more loyal
      3. Being unresponsive to suggestions and changes in the plans they have made
      4. Having difficulty communicating explanations, praise, or process to team members
5. Relying on their well-organized plans rather than the Holy
Spirit or prayer
6. Being too careful and becoming a stumbling block to the
overall vision

II. The gift of exhortation
A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to be close to people in need of
encouragement, challenge or earnest advice [Houts]
2. The supernatural ability to come alongside to help the
needy, to strengthen the weak, reassure the wavering,
buttress the buffeted, steady the faltering, console the
troubled, encourage the halting [Flynn]
3. The special ability to minister words of comfort,
consolation, encouragement and counsel to other members of
the Body so that they feel helped and healed [Wagner]
B. Biblical references: Acts 2:40; 11:23; 14:22; Romans 12:8;
15:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12; 5:14; 1 Timothy 4:2, 13;
Hebrews 10:25
C. Gift characteristics
1. Ability to encourage others, to drive home specific
biblical truths, and to give practical biblical
application
2. Ability to help others
3. Ability to tell others the truth about themselves, yet
give comfort and understanding
4. Ability to look toward what people can become and
encourage them to envision those possibilities
5. Commitment to offering specific and practical guidance for
others' spiritual growth
D. Gift liabilities
1. Difficulty in following through with an individual or
project because of a strong desire to move on to a new
individual or project
2. Tendency to become vision-centered rather than person-
centered
3. Tendency to offer "quick fixes"
4. Tendency to jump to conclusions before hearing a person
out because of a desire for action
5. Tendency to offer direct or harsh counsel on one extreme
and be too sensitive on the other

III. The gift of giving
A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to earn money, manage it well, and
wisely give for the Lord's work [Houts]
2. The God-given ability, perhaps to earn, certainly to give
money for the progress of God's work with such care and
cheer that the recipients are strengthened [Flynn]
3. The special ability to contribute material resources to
the work of the Lord with liberality and cheerfulness
[Wagner]
B. Biblical references: Acts 4:36-37; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:2-8

C. Gift characteristics
1. Give freely out of whatever resources available to them
2. See money and possessions as tools to serve God and, therefore, set them aside for special use
3. Often give quietly and confidentially, desiring no fanfare
4. Show strong interest and support in the people and the causes they support
5. Give liberally to their church and other causes which advance the Kingdom of God

D. Gift liabilities
1. May give without holding the recipient accountable
2. May cause their family to suffer in order to give to their cause
3. Are often critical of how others spend their money
4. May pressure others to give as they do
5. Can be easily misled to give to causes which in reality may not be furthering the Kingdom of God

IV. The gift of leadership
A. Definition of gift
1. The special ability to set goals and to motivate others towards their accomplishment in the body of Christ [Houts]
2. The special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God [Wagner]

B. Biblical references: Acts 7:10; 15:7-11; Romans 12:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7

C. Gift characteristics
1. Like the conductor of a symphony orchestra, he/she involves each musician and musical instrument to play in musical harmony. Likewise, this individual involves each person meaningfully in ministry in the Body.
2. Provides oversight for the vision and direction for the overall process; develops the "big picture"
3. Is able to see the final results of a major undertaking in advance
4. Shares the vision with others and is able to involve people in the process of getting the task completed
5. Is a natural leader, the person in charge
6. Can draw people to follow him because of his unique spiritual giftedness

D. Gift liabilities
1. Becoming too involved with administrative details
2. Being caught up in the "big picture" and thereby becoming insensitive to individuals who are carrying out part of the vision
3. Becoming dominant and demanding if not sensitive to the
Holy Spirit: becoming focused on authority rather than ministry
4. Becoming prideful in a position with power
5. Missing many smaller details in the "big picture" process if not a gifted administrator
Lesson 5: Other Spiritual Gifts

In this lesson we are going to study two different categories of spiritual gifts. The first category of gifts is the "being gifts." These gifts include discernment, faith, knowledge, and wisdom. In his book, *Team Ministry*, Larry Gilbert calls these same four gifts the "enabling gifts." The second category of gifts is referred to as the "sign gifts." These gifts include miracles, healing, tongues and interpretation.

I. Understanding the Being Gifts - The being gifts, or the enabling gifts, are catalysts that tie one's spiritual qualities to his/her spiritual gifts [Gilbert, p. 65]. A catalyst is an agent that is used to speed up the process of other working agents. Therefore, the being gifts are gifts that are used to speed up the work of the public and support gifts. The being gifts are available to all Christians and should be sought after by all believers.

A. The gift of discernment
   1. Definition of gift
      a. The special ability to distinguish between truth and error, good and evil, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Antichrist [Houts]
      b. The special ability to know with assurance whether certain behaviors purported to be of God are in reality divine, human, or satanic [Wagner]

B. The gift of faith
   1. Definition of gift
      a. An unusual ability to trust in the presence and power of God and to act on this trust [Houts]
      b. The ability to see something that God wants done and to sustain unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of seemingly insurmountable obstacles [Flynn]

C. The gift of knowledge
   1. Definition of gift
      a. The special ability to master God's revealed truth in Scripture [Houts]
      b. The ability to search, systematize, and summarize the teachings of the Word of God, thereby enabling the Christian to acquire deep insight into divine truth
II. Understanding the Sign Gifts - The last category of gifts that we will study is the sign gifts. In his Gospel, John indicates that Jesus performed many signs and miracles which authenticated who He was (John 20:30-31). At the birth of Jesus, a sign was used to distinguish the Christ child from the other children born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:12). In the Epistles Paul speaks of the miraculous display of God's power as the distinguishing characteristic that proved apostleship (2 Corinthians 12:12). Therefore, the purpose of signs was to distinguish a person as a true messenger of God and to authenticate the message that person brought to the people. In the first century before the New Testament was completed, it was necessary for the Church to receive special revelation from God. As a bridge during that transitional period, God gave sign gifts which functioned to authenticate the revelation received. Those with the gifts of miracles, healings, tongues and interpretations authenticated that revelation.

A. The gift of miracles
1. Definition of the gift: An event of supernatural power, palpable to the senses, accompanying the servant of the Lord to authenticate the divine commission
2. Three words used in reference to miracles
   a. Power - an event of supernatural power
   b. Wonder - palpable to the senses
   c. Sign - accompanying the servant of the Lord to authenticate the divine commission

B. The gift of healing
1. Definition of the gift: The ability to intervene in a supernatural way as an instrument for the curing of illness and the restoration of health
3. What the gift of healing does not do
   a. Does not heal every illness
   b. Does not depend on the sick person's faith
   c. Does not account for all healing
d. Does not exist equally in all creatures

C. The gifts of tongues and interpretation
1. Definition of gifts
   a. The gift of tongues is the ability to speak the Gospel message to someone of a different language in his language. Also, the gift may refer to the speaking of ecstatic utterances.
   b. The gift of interpretation is a person's ability to translate an unknown language. In the case of ecstatic utterances, the gift would be to interpret the non-linguistic sounds.

2. Biblical references: 1 Corinthians 12:28, 30

III. Understanding the Sign Gifts and the Charismatic Movement
A. Are the sign gifts for today?
   2. The sign gifts are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 ff, but are not found in Ephesians 4:7-16 or Romans 12:6-8.
   3. The doctrine of salvation had already been confirmed by signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Spirit (Hebrews 2:3-4). The phrase "was confirmed" is past tense. Also, the book of Hebrews was written around 68 A.D.
   4. The scriptural teaching concerning tongues
      a. 1 Corinthians 14:21 - The gift of tongues was a sign to Israel because of their unbelief. This verse is also a quotation of Isaiah 28:11-12.
      b. 1 Corinthians 14:1-12 - The gift of tongues is an inferior means of communication.
      c. 1 Corinthians 14:13-19 - The gift of tongues is an inferior method of praise.
      d. 1 Corinthians 14:20-25 - The gift of tongues is an inferior method of evangelism.
      e. Revelation 22:18 - The gift of speaking in tongues was rendered useless with the completion of the New Testament Canon.

B. Understanding the charismatic movement - Larry Gilbert, in his book, Team Ministry, discusses the five basic positions concerning the charismatic movement.
   1. Extreme charismatic - The gifts are given through a second work of the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues is the evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
   2. Charismatic - All the gifts are valid today and are given just as they were in the early church. All the gifts should be exercised in the local church.
   3. Limited-Charismatic - All the gifts are valid today and are given just as they were in the early church. All the gifts should be manifested in the universal church.
   4. Non-Charismatic - All gifts are not valid today; therefore, the miraculous gifts should not be exercised in any church.
   5. Anti-Charismatic - Same as non-charismatic, except that
they tag all charismatics as extreme. Heretics and false teachers are anti-charismatic.

**Assignment for next lesson:**

Complete the "128 Spiritual Gift Statements" in the *Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts*. After finishing the questions, complete the section titled "Service Opportunities." Before the beginning of the next lesson, the instructor will go over and tabulate the results with the student.
Lesson 6: Discovering and Using Your Spiritual Gifts

God intended for the Christian life to be dynamic. As Christians, we are to be under the teaching of the Word of God, understand and apply its meaning, and serve God and our fellow believers. The Holy Spirit has given to the believer spiritual gifts. However, those gifts are useless and worthless if they are not used. God intends that our spiritual gifts be put to use in His service and within the body of Christ. As previously mentioned Paul often used the metaphor of a body to describe the church. Also, Paul often points out that the body of Christ is dependent upon each of its members serving one another. It is true that there are some members in the body who are more outstanding than others; however, all are equally important.

The worst thing that can happen to the human body is for one of its systems to become dysfunctional. Likewise, in the body of Christ when one member becomes dysfunctional, it hurts that body. Sometimes when a member of the body of Christ does not function properly by ceasing or refusing to serve, then paralysis, sickness, deterioration, and sometimes death can occur. In order for the body to maintain strength, health, and vitality, every member must function and serve all the members of that body. Paul states, "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13). We can grow in our spiritual life, we can become strong, and we can maintain spiritual health if we use our spiritual gifts to meet the needs of the other members of the body.

In this lesson we are going to look at some guidelines on how we can discover our spiritual gifts. Also, we are going to examine the attitudes that are needed in discovering our spiritual gifts.

I. Four attitudes to avoid in discovering your spiritual gifts
A. "I'll use my spiritual gifts when I'm led by God." Spiritual gifts were not intended to be used after mountaintop experiences with God. God has given spiritual gifts to be used with a purpose (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

B. "My spiritual gifts are the most important or the least important." Every gift in the body of Christ is important and all are essential. A believer with this type of attitude is focused on self and not others. No spiritual gift should be exalted above the other (1 Corinthians 12:14-17). Also, no spiritual gift should be excluded (1 Corinthians 12:20-25).

C. "I'll be involved in no other ministry unless it is related to my spiritual gifts." Timothy had the gift of pastor-teacher (1 Timothy 4:13-14); however, Paul instructed him to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5). Most but not all
spiritual gifts should find expression in the life of every committed Christian. Every Christian should serve, give, teach, evangelize, exhort, etc. regardless of what his/her particular spiritual gift may be.

D. "My ministry is discouraging and not appreciated." No service for the Lord is easy. The Lord never promised that the ministry would be an easy ride down the interstate highway. Even the most gifted ones involved in ministry did not have an easy ride (2 Timothy 4:7, 9-10, 14-17). The body of Christ will mature when each of its members gives up the petty and trifling things and pitches in with a spirit of selfless love.

II. The right attitudes to have in discovering your spiritual gifts
A. "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you" (1 Timothy 4:14). Neglect can affect our lives; for example, consider Proverbs 24:30-34. In this passage the gardener neglected his garden and the result was a garden that produced nothing but weeds. The same can be true with our spiritual gifts. If we neglect to use them, then they will become overgrown with weeds.

B. "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12). No one pastor and not even a group of pastors can do everything in a church. No matter how gifted, talented, and dedicated pastors may be, the work to be done where they are called will far exceed their time and abilities. The plan of God was not for the pastor to meet all those needs but for the pastor to equip the people given to his care to meet those needs. God's basic blueprint for the church then is for the saints (the believers) to be equipped in order that they may be able to serve others. Therefore, the entire church is to be involved in the work of ministry.

III. Four guidelines to discovering your spiritual gifts
A. Gain insightful information concerning your spiritual gifts. Nothing dispels ignorance about spiritual gifts except obtaining information from the Word of God.

B. Exhibit toleration for all the spiritual gifts. Paul instructs us that we should use all the gifts regardless of how insignificant or lowly they may seem (1 Corinthians 12:21-25).

C. Focus attention on your spiritual gifts and exercise them faithfully. Each believer should concentrate on his particular spiritual gifts. The church was never intended to be a one-man team but a team ministry. God does not expect every Christian to volunteer for every ministry, serve on every committee, or take up the slack on every responsibility. However, He does expect us to exercise faithfully our spiritual gifts. When we do not exercise our muscles, they lose their tone; likewise, when we do not exercise our
spiritual gifts, they lose their effectiveness to the body of Christ.

D. Seek confirmation from others concerning your spiritual gifts. This is one of the most important guidelines in discovering your spiritual gifts. As you put your spiritual gifts into service, your effectiveness will become apparent to others. Their observations of your gifts will be a confirmation of whether you possess those spiritual gifts.
"My Talents Survey"

Name: ____________________________________________

1. Check every talent that "fits" you.

2. Circle the top 5

- Intelligence
- Humor
- Musical talent
- Acting ability
- Sensitivity
- Compassion
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Problem-solving ability
- Enthusiasm
- Listening skills
- Easy-going personality
- Organization
- Mechanical skills
- Creativity
- Dependability
- Dreams for future
- Enjoyment of hard work
- Ability to teach
- Ability to lead
- Peace-making
- Artistic ability
- Loyalty
- Supportive of friends
- Easy to approach
- Willing to take risks
- Efficiency
- Good with children
- Able to work well with hands
- Willingness to do thankless job
- Attention to details
- Ability to express self in words
- Athletic skills
- Cooking talent
- Practicality
- Sense of idealism
- Spontaneity
- Being a friend
- Gentleness
- Strength

Other: ___________________________________________

(Adapted from Discovering Spiritual Gifts in Small Groups)
APPENDIX 4-SPIRITUAL GIFTS COURSE EVALUATION

Please circle the appropriate response to the question.

1. To what extent did this spiritual gifts discovery program meet your expectations in terms of value and quality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than Expected</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met Expectations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond Expectations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went Beyond Expectations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How much learning did you experience during this spiritual gifts discovery program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How relevant is what you learned to your church or ministry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Relevant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Relevant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Relevant</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Would you recommend that others attend this spiritual gifts discovery program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Not</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. To what extent did the instructor demonstrate depth of understanding and credibility with regard to the material?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a very great extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a very great extent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. To what extent did the instructor have a motivating effect, contributing to your learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a very great extent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. To what extent did the instructor's interaction with the participants facilitate your learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To a very great extent</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>To little or no extent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Overall Rating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Comments:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

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1985.
VITA
Mark A. Harris

PERSONAL
Born: September 23, 1953
Married: Teresa M. Harris, June 3, 1978

EDUCATIONAL
A.A.S., Danville Community College, 1974
B.S., Averett College, 1976
M.Div., Columbia Graduate School of Bible and Missions, 1983

MINISTERIAL
Ordained: April 17, 1983, Third Avenue Congregational Christian Church, Danville, Virginia

PROFESSIONAL
Pastor: New Lebanon Congregational Christian Church, Reidsville, North Carolina, 1983-Present

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
Member, Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, 1984-Present